

THE
CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

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THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THE New Testament supplies almost the only materials available for the illustration of the history, doctrine, polity, and worship of the Church of the first century. The uninspired ecclesiastical documents of nearly contemporary date are very few, and they add little of importance to the information furnished by the apostles and evangelists.

The Christian Church cannot be said to have been properly organised until after the resurrection. The apostles had indeed been previously chosen, and had been employed, on one occasion, in preaching throughout the land; but as they were not yet directed to make the grand announcement that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah, their first mission was obviously intended simply to prepare the public mind for future revelations. They were commanded to go and "preach, saying, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Matt. x. 7). The seventy had also been selected, and sent forth on a similar errand. Many of the actions of our Lord had a typical significance; and the appointment of these two bands of missionaries may be thus interpreted. The twelve—corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel—represented the posterity of Abraham; the seventy—corresponding to the seventy nations into which the Gentiles were supposed to be divided—represented the rest of the human family. Our Lord said to the twelve: "Go *not* into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not" (Matt. x. 5); but His own movements were not thus circumscribed. He passed through the midst of Samaria (Luke xvii. 11); He tarried with the inhabitants of some of its cities (John iv. 40); and He was in "the way of the Gentiles" when "He departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon" (Matt. xv. 21). And He sent the seventy "two and two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself would come" (Luke x. 1). When He said to them: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest" (Luke x. 2), he apparently contemplated a field of labour wider than the boundaries of Palestine. But if, in the first instance, the

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twelve and the seventy represented somewhat different agencies—shadowing forth in the beginning a narrower, and in the sequel a more extended sphere of action—it is evident that these arrangements were never intended to mark any settled distinctions in the ministry; for when Christ rose from the dead, and appeared to the eleven, He gave them a boundless commission. He said unto them: “Go ye *into all the world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark xvi. 15).

The twelve were very slow to apprehend the meaning of this plain direction. Years passed away before they understood that the Gentiles were to be admitted to the full rights of spiritual citizenship. Meanwhile the first Christian Church was organised in Jerusalem; and it is easy to see how it was constituted. It was under the government of the twelve, who ruled it in common council. They were not all equally endowed, and the mental or other superiority of some above the rest could be felt and acknowledged, so that there may have been chief men among the brethren; but they were all of the same order, and they formed substantially the presbytery of the mother Church of Christendom. When, in the time of our Lord’s own ministry, they had disputed among themselves which of them should be accounted the greatest, He had taught them very decidedly the folly of any such contention. “One,” said He, “is your Master, even Christ, and *all ye are brethren*” (Matt. xxiii. 8). “Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister, and whosoever will be the chiefest shall be servant of all” (Mark x. 43, 44). Those entrusted with the evangelical commission have the same official rank and privileges, but in gifts and graces they vastly differ; and those who stand highest in Christ’s estimate are those who are most humble, most laborious, most willing to spend and be spent in His service.

We know well how the apostles were employed when they had the charge of the Church of the Jewish metropolis. They gave themselves “continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” (Acts vi. 4). When there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration, the twelve freed themselves from the encumbrance of this engagement by making provision for the appointment of the seven deacons. At a subsequent period we find *elders* coming into prominence in the Church of Jerusalem. These elders obviously take rank above the deacons, for they were associated with the apostles themselves in the ecclesiastical government. The apostles and elders sat together in the council mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts. And at a still later date we see the twelve apparently disposed to assume the name of *elders*, and thus to place themselves on a level with those brethren. John, under the designation of “the elder,” writes “unto the elect lady and her children,” and “unto the well-beloved Gaius” (2 John i. 3; John i.); and Peter, addressing the Churches of Asia Minor, says to them: “The elders who are among you I exhort, *who am also an elder*”

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(or, as we read in the New Version, just issued, *who am a fellow-elder*): "... feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Peter v. 1, 2). And when Paul took leave of the elders of Ephesus—as he believed, for the last time—he committed the care of the Church entirely to their keeping. "Take heed," said he, "unto yourselves, and to all the flock in the which the Holy Ghost *hath made you bishops*" (as we read in the new Revised Version) "to feed the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that, after my departing, grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them: *wherefore watch*" (Acts xx. 28-31).

It is indeed expressly stated by Dr. Lightfoot, the present Bishop of Durham—one of the most candid, as well as one of the ablest and most accomplished divines and critics of our age—that "as late as the year 70 (the date of the destruction of Jerusalem), *no distinct signs of episcopal government appeared in Gentile Christendom*" (Epistle to Philippians, p. 201, ed. 1879). The same high authority admits that towards the close of the first and the early part of the second century, there is evidence of the continued existence of presbyterial government at Rome, Corinth, and elsewhere. "At the close of the first century," says he, "Clement (of Rome) writes to Corinth, as at the beginning of the second century Polycarp writes to Philippi. As in the latter epistle, so in the former, *there is no allusion to the episcopal office*" (*Ibid.*, p. 216). "Though he (Clement) has occasion to speak of the ministry as an institution of the apostles, *he mentions only two orders, and is silent about the episcopal office*. Moreover, he still uses the word 'bishop' in the older sense in which it occurs in the apostolic writings, as a synonym for *presbyter*" (*Ibid.*, p. 218).

Such facts supply proof that a true Church may exist, and may be complete in all its parts, without what we call a diocesan bishop. Long after the apostles had finished their career on earth, churches, which they had themselves organised, remained still in this condition. According to Bishop Lightfoot, the Church of Rome, at the very close of the first century, had a Presbyterian constitution. The Church of Corinth had the same, and so also had the Church of Philippi at a date much later. But Dr. Lightfoot imagines that he has discovered some germs of Episcopacy in the primitive Church of Jerusalem, and he conceives that, from this centre, the system soon spread over all the Roman Empire. Statements already made go far to prove that this view of the origin of prelacy is exceedingly improbable. We have seen that all the apostles at first presided over the Church of Jerusalem. They met in common council, and ruled conjointly. They united in the ordination of the seven deacons; and when they heard that the people of Samaria "had received the Word of God," they consulted together, and "sent unto them Peter and John" (Acts viii. 14). According to a tradition handed down by Clement of Alexandria and

Eusebius, the twelve remained in the holy city for twelve years after the crucifixion; and there is not a tittle of evidence to show that, during all this time, any one among them either exercised or claimed any superior authority or jurisdiction. And, long afterwards, the same state of things continued. Bishop Lightfoot, Bishop Ellicott, Dean Alford, and others, maintain that the visit of Paul to Jerusalem—mentioned in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians—is the same as that recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts; and if so, it may be dated in the year 51, or about twenty years after the mother Church of Christendom was organised. Thus, by the help of two lights issuing from different points, we may see pretty clearly what was *then* the constitution of the Church of Jerusalem. Those lights assuredly do not reveal to us a bishop presiding at the helm of its government. Paul tells us that “James, Cephas, and John” then “seemed to be pillars,” that is, they took the lead in its administration, they were chief men among the brethren; but no one could dictate to his fellows. Luke informs us that “the apostles and elders”—James, Cephas, and John included—sat together in the same deliberative assembly. There was at first among them “much disputing;” for every one felt and acted as entitled to express an independent judgment; and the decision which was finally adopted had their unanimous sanction. Some assert that Peter must have been their chief, because, as they allege, he spoke *first* in the debate; whilst others contend that James must have occupied the chair, because, as they affirm, he spoke *last*. But neither representation can bear the test of impartial scrutiny; for the narrative of Luke indicates that Peter did *not* commence the discussion, and that James was *not* the last who had addressed the meeting. There had been “much disputing” *before* Peter stood up to deliver his sentiments; and when James sat down, he was evidently followed by others, who signified their approval of his views. The position occupied by Peter and James in the debate does not imply the official precedence of either.

There is reason to believe that the James of whom we are speaking, and who is called by Paul “the Lord’s brother” (Gal. i. 19), was not one of the twelve, though, like Barnabas, he is designated an *apostle*. He is said to have been converted about the time of the crucifixion, and to have been enrolled among the ministers of the Church of Jerusalem after the martyrdom of James, the brother of John. All accounts concur in representing him as a person of great weight of character. His integrity, prudence, and sagacity, added to his near relationship to our Saviour, imparted to him no little influence; and in all cases of importance and of difficulty, his advice was much respected. He at length became one of the ruling spirits of the Church in Palestine; and in after ages—when prelacy was becoming more and more fashionable, when arguments were eagerly sought out to recommend it, and when not a few spurious writings bearing the names of apostolic men, such

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as the Ignatian Epistles, the Clementine Homilies, and the Apostolic Constitutions, were fabricated with a view to its advancement—it began to be currently reported that James had been the first bishop of Jerusalem, and that Peter had been the first bishop of Rome. Neither of these statements rests on a basis of substantial evidence. One of the great proofs of the prelacy of James, drawn from the alleged place which he held in the Council of Jerusalem, has been just noticed; and the others, on which we do not think it necessary to dwell, are even more frivolous and inconclusive. We are told in the Epistle to the Galatians that, at the time of the conference there mentioned, James considered he had a mission not only to the Jews in Jerusalem, but to the “circumcision in general” (Gal. ii. 9); and the address of his letter “to the twelve tribes scattered abroad” (James i. 1), warrants the same inference. Neither in the Acts of the Apostles—where his name repeatedly occurs—nor in this canonical epistle, is there a single hint to support the conclusion that he was a located diocesan. In relation to his supposed office of Bishop of Jerusalem, the New Testament Scriptures are silent as the grave. According to Josephus (“Antiq.,” XX. ix. 1; Cave, “Lives of the Fathers,” i. 443), he was martyred A.D. 62—that is, eight years before the destruction of the Hebrew metropolis; and if, as some contend, the episcopal system had been established there long before, we might have expected that the place left vacant would have been forthwith occupied; for if a prelate were required to complete the organisation of the Church, he must then have been of special service; but it appears that during these eight most critical and eventful years, there was no bishop in the holy city. Immediately before the last siege, which was of about six months’ duration, all the disciples of our Lord withdrew from it and retired to Pella, a small town on the other side of the Jordan. The Christians declared that not a single individual of their community perished in the fall of Jerusalem. There is, indeed, a tradition that, after the siege, the apostles who were still living, and others, assembled there, and appointed Simeon, another of the relatives of our Lord, as the second bishop of the place; but this is apparently a silly and baseless legend. Why should the leading men of the Church come together from distant regions to set up a bishop where there was no congregation? Jerusalem was left by Titus a perfect desolation. “It was,” says Josephus, “so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those who dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those who came thither believe it had ever been inhabited” (“Wars of the Jews,” book VII. ch. i. § 1). For thirty years afterwards no Christian seems to have settled in the district. It therefore required neither bishop nor presbyter. After the lapse of forty-seven years, or in A.D. 117, the Church of Jerusalem consisted of one poor congregation, which met for worship in a little tabernacle on Mount Zion (see Milner, p. 65; Cave’s “Lives of the Fathers,” i. 173-74). The traditions setting forth James as the first Bishop of Jerusalem, and

Peter as the first Bishop of Rome, may therefore be fairly classed among the myths of ecclesiastical history.

Jerome—who flourished towards the close of the fourth century, and who was certainly one of the most distinguished and erudite of the fathers—gives the true account of the origin of prelacy. He affirms, unhesitatingly, that in the beginning “the churches were governed by the common council of the presbyters” (Comment. in Titum). “We may show,” says he in another place, “that anciently bishops and presbyters were the same; but, *by degrees*, that the plants of dissension might be rooted up, *all care was transferred to one*. As, therefore, the presbyters know that, in accordance with *the custom of the Church*, they are subject to him who has been set over them, so the bishops should know that they are greater than the presbyters, *rather by custom* than by the force of an appointment of the Lord” (Comment. in Titum). And again, when discussing the same subject, he observes, “What was done afterwards,” that is, after the Apostle John wrote his epistles, or after the end of the first century, “when one was elected who was set over the rest, was for a cure of schism, lest every one insisting upon his own will, should rend the Church of God” (Epist. ci. ad Evagrium).

It is not difficult to ascertain, with considerable precision, the time when the prevalence of divisions suggested the appointment in certain churches of a bishop as the centre of unity. Speaking of the removal of Simeon of Jerusalem, who died in A.D. 116, Hegesippus, an author who wrote in the latter half of the second century, states that, until then—that is, until A.D. 116—the Church continued “as a pure and uncorrupted virgin.” “If,” he adds, “there were any at all who attempted to pervert the right standard of saving doctrine, they were yet skulking in dark retreats; but when the sacred company of the apostles had, in various ways, finished their career, and the generation of those who had been privileged to hear their inspired wisdom had passed away, then at length the fraud of false teachers produced a confederacy of impious errors” (Euseb. iii. 32). About the beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius, who succeeded to the purple in A.D. 138, the errorists became exceedingly troublesome. Their leaders, swarming in great numbers to Rome, grievously disturbed the peace of the Church at the seat of the Empire. At this crisis the idea of arming the president of the presbytery with special authority suggested itself as the best means of preserving order; and thus the episcopal system, in its earliest form, was inaugurated. It was cradled in the imperial city. Rome, not Jerusalem, was the centre from which it radiated. Thus it was that the Church of the proud metropolis, which then had dominion over the kings of the earth, took up so soon such an influential position. From this date it was regarded as the centre of Catholic unity. In the time of Hyginus, who was at the head of the Roman presbytery from A.D. 139 to A.D. 142, a movement seems to have been made to bring about the change. Hence, in the Pontifical Book—an old biographical account of

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the popes often quoted as a document of no little value by the most eminent writers of the Roman Catholic communion—it is announced that Hyginus “arranged the clergy and distributed the gradations.” (Binii Concil. i. 65; Baronius ad annum 158). Cyprian, about a century after the introduction of the new polity, expressly declares that, from the Church of Rome, “*the unity of the priesthood took its rise*” (Epist. lv.) At first the progress of Episcopacy was slow. The jurisdiction of the bishop did not extend beyond the walls of the city in which he resided. In the middle of the third century, the Bishop of Rome, by far the most important churchman in existence, had not more than forty-six presbyters under his care. At the same period Cyprian, the greatest prelate in the West African Church, had only eight presbyters in his bishopric (Euseb. vi. 43; Sage’s Vindic., p. 348, London, 1701). In the fourth century, bishops of villages, with small congregations, were to be found here and there all over the Roman Empire. At length parochial bishops were everywhere supplanted by diocesans; and in the end, the Italian patriarch was recognised throughout the Latin Church as the leader of the Catholic world.

Another portion of the subject before us requires little illustration, as it is generally admitted by all who have carefully examined it, that the constitution of the early Christian Church was eminently popular. When a successor to Judas was required, the nomination was not made by the remaining apostles, but by the 120 brethren assembled in Jerusalem; and when it was found necessary to ordain seven deacons, the choice was entrusted to the multitude of the disciples. Even in matters of comparatively little moment, the people were consulted. We read of the brother who was “*chosen of the churches*” to travel with Paul (2 Cor. viii. 19); and we find the same apostle saying to the Corinthians, “*Whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem*” (1 Cor. xvi. 3). For many generations the office-bearers of the Christian Church were chosen by popular suffrage. On this point Bishop Bilson is a most competent witness, and he delivers a clear and comprehensive testimony. “The fullest words,” says he, “that the ancient Greek writers use for all the parts of election—as, to *propose*, to *name*, to *choose*, to *decree*—are in the stories ecclesiastical applied to the people.” And again, “In the Primitive Church the people did propose, *name*, *elect*, and *decree*, as well as the clergy; and although the presbyters had more skill to judge, yet *the people had as much right to choose their pastor*; and if the most part of them did agree, they *did carry it from the clergy*” (Perpetual Govt. of the Church, 462, 463).

The worship of the early Christian Church appears to have closely resembled the worship of the Jewish synagogue. The praises of God were celebrated in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; the Scriptures were read; prayer was offered up; and the Word of God was expounded. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper took

the place of circumcision and the passover. The initiatory rite of the Christian Church was, there is reason to believe, dispensed to children as well as to adults; for we read again and again of the baptism of whole households, and it is rare to meet with any considerable number of families without a single child. When Paul writes to "the saints which are at Ephesus" (Eph. i. 1), we find children among those whom he addresses (Eph. vi. 1); and he teaches that, when one of the parents is a member of the Church, the offspring are entitled to be dedicated to God. "The unbelieving husband," says he, "is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean; *but now are they holy*" (1 Cor. vii. 14). As the Jewish circumcision was administered on the eighth day after birth, some in the early Church contended that the Christian rite should be postponed until the same period. About the middle of the third century, this nice point was submitted to an African synod; and it was then decided by the assembled fathers that the baptism of the infant need not be so long delayed. And it is by no means clear that baptism was administered by immersion. In the New Testament, "to baptise" does not always signify "to dip." The Israelites, who were "*baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea*" (1 Cor. x. 2), were not plunged into the tide; they "went into the midst of the sea *upon the dry ground*" (Exod. xiv. 22); and if, when Paul is speaking of those who were "*baptised for the dead*" (1 Cor. xv. 29), he refers to such as had contracted ceremonial defilement by touching a dead body or a grave, and who were purified by the application of the ashes of the red heifer (Num. xix. 18, 19, 21), he plainly teaches that there may be baptism by sprinkling.* And originally the communicants were *seated* when they partook of the Eucharist. When our Lord instituted this sacrament, "He *sat down* with the twelve" (Matt. xxvi. 20); and in the days of Justin Martyr, in the middle of the second century, the sitting posture seems to have been still observed. It was soon, however, superseded by *standing*; and when the elements began at length to be regarded as the very body and blood of Christ, the kneeling posture was introduced.

As, on the present occasion, we can only sketch very briefly the outlines of the subject under discussion, we must pass over several points of more or less interest; but there is one topic of prime importance which we have not yet noticed, and which claims our special consideration. We refer to the *doctrines* of the early Church. These doctrines are summed up in the answer to the question, *What think ye of Christ?* The apostles and evangelists taught that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, and the truths relating to His person and His mission constituted the gospel which they preached. These truths are exhibited

* The sprinkling of the ashes foreshadowed a way of deliverance from the pollution of death and the grave, and thus apparently pointed to the resurrection of the body in incorruption and in glory.

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in the New Testament in all their fulness and variety. We are there instructed to believe that Christ is the Lord from heaven ; that He came to seek and to save that which was lost ; that He became flesh, and dwelt amongst men ; that He bare the sins of His people in His own body on the tree ; that He was raised again for their justification ; and that, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, he ever liveth as their all-prevailing Intercessor. The article of the *Trinity* is not set forth in the New Testament exactly in the style in which it was presented in the days of Athanasius, and *the word* was not introduced into ecclesiastical nomenclature until towards the close of the second century ; but, withal, the doctrine runs like a golden thread throughout the whole texture of the Christian Scriptures, and cannot be separated from them without tearing the book to pieces. It is implied in the baptismal formula : " In (or into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost " (Matt. xxviii. 19) ; and in the apostolic benediction : " The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all " (2 Cor. xiii. 14). The doctrine of the *Atonement* is inculcated in the New Testament in language so plain that it cannot well be misinterpreted. We read that Jesus Christ is " the propitiation for our sins " (1 John ii. 2) ; that " we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son " (Rom. v. 10) ; and that He " suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God " (1 Peter iii. 18). *Salvation by faith* is proclaimed in terms equally clear and definite. " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," said Paul, " and thou shalt be saved " (Acts xvi. 31). " A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law " (Rom. iii. 28). " To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness " (Rom. iv. 5). " He that believeth in me," said Christ Himself, " though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die " (John xi. 25). *The sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith and practice* for the children of God is also broadly asserted. " The Scriptures," says Paul, " are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works " (2 Tim. iii. 15-17).

It is worthy of note that in the New Testament matters of doctrine occupy a far more prominent position than matters of polity or discipline. We may read the holy volume again and again, and yet may not be fully satisfied in relation to sundry questions connected with Church government and worship ; but the great principles of the doctrine of Christ are written as with a pencil of light, so that, except by those who are wilfully blinded by pride or prejudice, they cannot be well mistaken. And here we may see the grace and goodness of the Author of revelation. He has been pleased to make us most distinctly

acquainted with those things which it most concerns us to know. As men may live and thrive under different forms of civil administration, so believers may be preserved and may grow in grace under different forms of ecclesiastical polity. One form of worship may be very much better and more Scriptural than another, and yet any form may be better than none. But as men cannot live without food, so the soul cannot be sustained without the spiritual nutriment of the doctrines of the Gospel. And the more purely and faithfully these doctrines are preached, the Church may be expected to exhibit more abundantly the power of godliness. Hence it was that, in primitive times, there were so many noble specimens of the energy of faith, and of the beauty of holiness. The glorious Gospel, announced by men who derived it undiluted from the lips of Christ Himself, produced a profound impression on multitudes who heard it, turning them from darkness to light, and leading the world to see, by the visible improvement in their conduct, what it is to be born again. The superior morality of the early disciples was a matter of common observation. As late as the beginning of the third century, Tertullian could venture to assert that, among the crowds of offenders brought before the magistrates, none were Christians ("Apol.," c. 44). And another of their advocates, writing at a somewhat later date, could testify that, whilst the prisons were filled with heathen criminals, no Christian was there, except on account of his faith. (Minucius Felix. Octavius.)

Before concluding, we may venture to suggest that, on the whole, the review of the condition of early Christianity is not altogether discouraging. The Reformation damaged the idol of the apostolical succession; but it did not break the heart of the Church. The Spirit of God still breathed in many of its separated members. The Reformation simply promoted a return to primitive arrangements. Since the days of Paul and Peter, the Church has experienced not a few vicissitudes; its constitution has been much changed; its form of worship has again and again been modified; many of the rights and privileges of its members have been taken from them; and visible sections of it have been sunk in the lowest depths of crime and superstition; but still the body of Christ has never entirely lost its identity. In the first ages, the Church was without a pope, without diocesan bishops, and without fixed liturgies. Its present aspect is very different from that which it then exhibited. But in the darkest night of its spiritual history it had bright stars of truth shining in its firmament, and indicating the way of salvation. It has never ceased to recognise the Scriptures as the Word of God; it has never disowned the incarnation of Christ, nor His deity, nor His atonement. The great body even of its nominal adherents have never denied the supernatural, nor the reality of miracles, nor the certainty of a general judgment. There has still been a kingdom of God among men—a holy Catholic Church. And what, it may be asked, is the holy Catholic Church? We reply, It is

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not limited to any ecclesiastical confederation, it is neither Protestant nor Romanist, Congregational nor Presbyterian. It is the communion of saints ; it includes all the children of God ; it contains the good and the true of all denominations. It is a united body, for every one of its members is joined by a vital union to Christ the Head ; it is sustained by the power of Omnipotence, and the gates of hell can never prevail against it. In every one of its members the Spirit of God dwells ; and every one of them holds fellowship with the King of the universe. Some of them see the whole truth more clearly than others, and some of them cherish many errors ; but all have living faith ; all hate sin and love God ; all are renewed in the spirit of their minds ; and all arrived at years of understanding, know as much of the truth as is sufficient to sanctify and to save.

W. D. KILLEN.

THE HYMNS OF THE HIGHLANDS.

IT is within the last hundred years that the Highlands of Scotland have become anything more than a mere name to outsiders. Since then, poets, novelists, and artists have repaired to those untrodden fields on isle and mainland for fresh scenes and original characters ; while the tourist has found a scenery that charms the eye, and the sportsman a grand and varied field for sport. To the Christian the religious history of the people of that part of the empire is a subject of greater interest ; for among the Celto-Norse inhabitants of the Highlands, in earlier as in later days, were reared not a few of those whose names shed lustre on our religious history. From Patrick and Columba to Duff and Macleod, the religious and enthusiastic nature of the Celt has helped to create fervour and life in many spheres of Christian activity.

A good deal has been said and written recently of the general literature of the Gael, which mainly consists of poetry. But hitherto little attention has been bestowed on his religious poetry, to the influence of which much of the spiritual life of the people at present is due. Highland poetry represents very adequately the land, the soil, and the race from whence it sprang. We see this especially in its almost total want of humour, of wit, and of satire. The exceptions to this are so few that they confirm the rule. In reading Celtic poetry one feels the air of intense realism ; the soul is fascinated by its grim and gloomy grandeur. The Highlander had little acquaintance for ages with any literature beyond his own, nor did he come in contact with many men or many races. His heart was always concerned with the ever-present, solemn struggle of life—its severe actualities, always so patent in a poor and barren country. There was little in his life

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that could be regarded as cheerful. He and his people from age to age moved on under the equipment of arms, beneath a bannered front on which hostile forces perpetually hovered. On the south-east they were rarely at peace with their own Lowland countrymen, except when some great crisis drew the people into a united army to oppose the hereditary foe of Scottish independence. Among themselves the bloody rivalries of chiefs and clans were fatal to intellectual calm and culture; and only the severer virtues of the Christian life could take root and flourish. The mountains in their majestic solitudes were not favourable to the development of humour and the artistic faculty. The followers of Donald Balloch, when their gory exercise at Harlaw was over, could not be expected to sit down cheerfully to enjoy an æsthetic entertainment of the modern kind. The great and melancholy mountains were always before their eyes. He who dwelt by the base of Cruachan could scarcely life up his eyes without seeing the majestic Nevis; and north of Nevis the broad-shouldered Wyvis was seen from afar peering over its mighty fellows. Minds accustomed to such sublime visions and attractions frequently become regardless of the forms and settings of minor things. Mountains present rather a grandeur and a heaviness to the human heart, as is well illustrated in the sombre annals of the ancient Hebrew. They confront us with a reign of law, stern and impassive. The merry sunbeams cannot elicit from them a smile; their crests, like stern sentinels, couch before the familiar gaze of the people; their bosoms protract the thunders, retain the echoes; and the lightnings flash harmless on their adamant brows. Again, the thoughts of the inhabitants of the islands are moulded, not only by the perpetual snow, the mist, and the shadows of the great mountains, but by the deep-breasted ocean, with its many mysteries of sound, life, and movement. So the stern gloom of the Celtic nature was fostered by the deeper sternness of the external world around. There is not much playfulness in the poetry of the Gael. There is directness of vision, there is the intense mystical charm of nature; but it is deficient in that quality of comprehensiveness where all the features of poetry present themselves. The people moved under an oppressive sense of the supernatural; they lived ever within the fear and the presence of the unseen and the mysterious. Of them it might be said that they "endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Their poetry was what all genuine poetry is—an entrance into the wisdom and spirit of the universe—an insight into the life and truth of things.

To these Celts living in their lonely glens, wrapt in the wind-tossed wreaths of cloud and mist hanging from the bare brows of mountains, the doctrines of Christianity came home with peculiar force. Its life-giving faith charmed by its simplicity. The people, many of them fishermen, found their own life-struggles and heart-anxieties interpreted in the simple lives of the early Christians—those brave-hearted fishermen in the land of Israel, who became instrumental in laying the

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foundation-stones of our Christian civilisation. The Celt, perhaps because of his impatience of logical processes, and his general unreadiness or inability to climb to the heights of great arguments, takes up Christianity in a somewhat intuitive fashion—he somehow instinctively discerns its divine origin, power, and sanction. He never has much difficulty in accepting and retaining the most uninviting dogmas. His emotional, poetic nature delights, yea, revels in the sterner and gloomier doctrines of the Calvinistic system of theology. To him it is no intellectual hardship to accept unreservedly the less popular parts of that system. In mind and heart he yields a ready unquestioning submission to the Divine sovereignty; the problems which free-will and foreknowledge absolute suggest to pure intellect do not disturb him; his Christian experience practically explains to him how his will becomes lost in that of the Infinite, and how he can realise perfect freedom in the service of his Maker. And in this poetic nature of his, as in the hymnology of nearly all ages and all peoples, the seeds of heretical development rarely obtain a lodgment. He is orthodox or nothing; severely Protestant or slavishly Popish.

The religious poetry of the Highlands might be regarded as belonging to three periods—the Early, the Mediæval, and the Modern.

It was during the early period that much of the secular ballad literature that has made the name of Ossian so famous was produced. The heathenism of the Finian ages was finally discredited by Columba. The poetic dialogues, in which the struggle has been handed down to us, between Christian Patrick and heathen Ossian, are among the most interesting of these early ballads. Among the Christian productions of the period is one entitled "Patrick's Hymn," which forms one of the Gaelic hymns in the "*Liber Hymnorum*," a manuscript of the eleventh century, belonging to Trinity College, Dublin. The hymn bears internal evidence of belonging to a much earlier date. The original text will be found in the work of Professor Windisch of Leipzig, "*Irishe Texte mit Wörterbuch*," as well as in the *Scottish Celtic Review*. Patrick appears to have been a true missionary of the cross of Christ—a man in whose heart there lay a mighty depth of holy ardour—whose energy and zeal were inexhaustible, judging from this hymn, which I have attempted to put in English rhyme. "*Patrice dorone innimunsá*,"—*Patrick made this hymn*—are the first words of the prose introduction to this remarkable creed prayer. It is stated that the hymn was composed in the time of Leogaire, son of Neil. The cause of its composition was alleged to be the need of "protection with his monks against the mortal enemies who were in league against the clerics."

I bind myself to-day—
To the power of the Trinity;
To belief in the all-gracious Three;
To confession that the Three are One,
In the Maker of the world and sun.

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I bind myself to-day—
 To the power of the birth of Christ ;
 To the truth that Jesus was baptised ;
 To the fact that path of death He trod ;
 That three days He lay beneath the sod ;
 To the power of Resurrection morn ;
 That from the earth to heaven He was borne ;
 To the power of His judgment-call,
 When a final state shall be assigned to all.

I bind myself to-day—
 To the power of the cherubs high :
 In obedience of the angels nigh ;
 In attendance of archangels' might ;
 In the hope of resurrection's light ;
 In the prayers of the sires of eld ;
 In the visions that the seers beheld ;
 In the precepts the apostles taught ;
 In the faith in which confessors wrought ;
 In the innocence of virgins pure ;
 In the deeds of just men that endure.

I bind myself to-day—
 To the power of Heaven ;
 To the lustre sun-given ;
 To the pureness snow-driven ;
 To fiery flames brightening ;
 To the swiftness of lightning ;
 To the speed of the breeze ;
 To the depth of the seas ;
 To the firmness of land ;
 And the rocks that there stand, &c.

This hymn was to be a corslet of faith, for soul and body, against demons, men, and vices. Devils could not stand before the face of him who sang it ; envy and poison could do no harm ; in this life it would be a safe-guard against sudden death ; and it would be a covering of defence (*lùireach—lorica*) after death. When Patrick sang it, the opposition of the royal Leogaire melted away like the snow on the brows of the hills before the advance of the Son of Morning.

There is something unique—rather grotesque—about this production, which is found nowhere else in Gaelic poetry. The use made of the elements is rather striking—something unusual in a poem intended to be devotional. We have no other relics of this early period. There are some hymns extant which have been attributed to Columba, but they were composed in Latin ; and so, do not properly belong to the hymns of the people. It is in Ireland that the hymn given above has been preserved ; but, like much of the literature of that period, it is in the language of the Highlands, while Patrick himself, the author, is recognised now to have been a native of the latter country.

There were several bards that composed religious poetry during the Mediæval period. First, and chief of these, was Muireadhach Albannach, or Murdoch of Albin. All his productions bear a deeply devotional

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character, which is rather remarkable when it is remembered how uncivilised the Highlands were then at the time in which he flourished, between A.D. 1180 and 1220. He was the ancestor of a famous line of bards and senachies who became hereditary in the Clanranald family. His compositions give evidence of considerable culture and scholarship, while they exhibit much earnestness and intensity of feeling. In them we detect the germs of that extreme subjectivity, which has characterised later Christian life in the Highlands. Muireadhach is supposed to have been an ecclesiastic, like many of those who composed in mediæval times. Some of the words in the following verses, by him, are slightly suggestive of Popish ideas:—

I praise Thee, Christ, that on Thy breast
A guilty one like me may rest;
And that Thy favour I can share;
And on my lips Thy cross may bear.

O Jesus, sanctify my heart,
My hands and feet and every part!
Me sanctify in Thy good grace,—
Blood, flesh, and bones, and all my ways.

I never cease committing sin;
For still its love resides within:
May God His holy fragrance shed
Upon my heart and on my head.

Great, glorious One, vouchsafe relief
From all the ills that bring me grief;
Ere I am laid beneath the sod,
Before me smooth my way to God.

In another poem, he recommends the sinner to make peace with "the clergy," to "confess" himself to his "priest," and to conceal none of his many sins, although it would be sore to tell their evil. Muireadhach was a poet of considerable vigour, while his piety appears to have been unquestionable.

Later on the ecclesiastics do not appear to have devoted much of their talents to the composition of sacred poetry. We find them, however, very diligent in the study of secular productions. Sir James Macgregor, Dean of Lismore, in conjunction with his brother, Duncan, collected previous to 1512-20 many of these together; and his manuscript is known as the "Book of the Dean of Lismore," first published in 1862. In the Highlands, as elsewhere before the Reformation, the corrupt lives of the clergy were notorious, of which several poems in Macgregor's Work afford indubitable evidence. In a string of proverbial sayings by a Phelim Macdougall we have many of the popular aphorisms by which the religious world of the day were apparently guided in their thoughts and actions. Some of Phelim's sayings are:—

Not good is a bishop without warrant;
Not good is a blemish on an elder;
Not good a priest with one eye;
Not good a parson if a beggar.

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Immediately before the Reformation there was not much religious light in the Highlands. The growth and development of popery had well nigh extinguished the life which the early missionaries planted. And it took nearly two centuries after the Reformation era before lost ground began to be recovered. During that time the people were nominally Protestant, but there was not much of the Gospel preached among them.

Modern religious poetry—what is still loved, read, and sung in the Highlands—begins with the eighteenth century, at a time when the first throbblings of reviving spiritual life were felt among the people. In Argyllshire we come across the names of John Ban Maor, Bean a' Bharra, Macindeor, and Mackeich. But the author whose composition obtained the largest circulation and the greatest popularity was David Mackellar, a native of Cowal, whose Hymn, or rather poem, published in Glasgow about 1752, was for a long time a favourite at Christian firesides. The people appear to have highly appreciated a production in rhyme in which they found the doctrines they loved woven in an interesting manner. The Gaelic version of the Psalms was not yet circulated among them. At the same time, in the north of Scotland, the sacred muse began to kindle her holy flame. John Mackay of Farr, in Sutherland, composed a number of religious pieces; and is supposed to have suggested to the celebrated Dugald Buchanan of Rannoch the composition of his famous "Spiritual Hymns." Buchanan, born in Perthshire in 1716, an eloquent lay evangelist and a distinguished Celtic scholar, is one of the greatest of the Gaelic bards, and undoubtedly the greatest of our hymn-writers. His Hymns were published in 1766, and he died in 1768. They are eight in number; and the principal of them are on such themes as *The Sufferings of Christ*, which the author treats in very tender and melting strains; *Winter*, in which lessons are taken from the seasons; the *Skull*, which is boldly and skilfully questioned as to the life and lot of its quondam possessor; and the *Day of Judgment*, which, in sublimity and dramatic power, stands unrivalled in the whole field of Gaelic poetry. This last, as it was with his Cymric contemporary, Gronwy Owen, was his favourite subject. The following verses, rendered from his *Day of Judgment*, will give an idea of the manner of the poem—it is certainly more like a poem than what is generally known as a hymn, being a hundred and twenty-eight quatrains in length:—

Then, like the morn enkindling red,
A glowing spreads throughout the skies;
Where Jesus comes a glare is shed
By heaven's burning tapestries.

The clouds all suddenly unfold
To make for the High King a door;
And we the Mighty Judge behold
Whose glory streams forth evermore.

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The rainbow glows around His form ;
His voice resounds like mountain floods ;
Outflashing o'er the sullen storm,
His lightning eye pours from the clouds.

The sun, great lustre of the skies,
Before His glorious Person pales :
At length her failing brightness dies
Before the light His face unveils.

Her robes of gloom she will uptake ;
The blood-red moon drops down in space ;
The mighty heavenly powers shall shake,
Outcasting planets from their place.

Like tempest-shaken fruit on trees,
So shall they tremble in the skies ;
Like heavy raindrops on the breeze,
Their glory like a dead man's eyes.

The poetical conceptions of Buchanan have woven themselves into the theological ideas of the Highlander, like those of Milton into the religious thought of England, with which the bard of Rannoch was evidently quite familiar. While the country around him was trembling with the roar of that Rebellion which had so gory a termination on the bleak shivering moor of Culloden, Buchanan was quietly composing those holy strains, which have been more powerful factors than hosts of armed men could be in accomplishing the silent revolution of thought and life which took place last century in the Highlands. The agents, of whom he was one, of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, achieved far more in tranquillising the Highlands and Islands, and in extinguishing Jacobite sympathies, than the bloody battalions of Cumberland ; and it might be remarked in passing, that nothing else than a similar army of agents can outroot Fenian treason from the heart of the troublesome and much-enduring Irish Celt.

While Buchanan was tuning his sacred harp in the Central Highlands, Donald Matheson, born in the parish of Kildonan in 1719, was composing in Sutherland, in the far north. He was a small farmer who stood high in the estimation of his religious countrymen. The parish minister declared that a single poem of Matheson's produced more good in the district than all his own preaching accomplished during many years. His poetry is of a high order, but somewhat abstruse and unintelligible to the natives of other counties who are unacquainted with his provincial dialect.

At the same time, in the neighbourhood of Inverness, there flourished Lachlan MacLauchlan, the poet-preacher of Abriachan, on the north of Loch Ness. He was one of the agents of the Society already mentioned, and was the first to bring the semi-heathen smuggling inhabitants of Abriachan under the influence of the Gospel. In one of his poems he refers to the ecclesiastical troubles of the day in Scotland, and makes patronage in the Church of Scotland the supreme *fons malorum*. The

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bard looks forward hopefully to the time when the church should awake out of the grave of corruption under the stone of Patronage :

Yet when her Head the word has spoken
The stone is raised—Death's power is broken ;
The patron's power disappears,
And we'll have praise instead of tears.

Two of the grandsons of the poet were ministers in 1843, and at the Disruption left the Church of Scotland.

During the latter part of the last and the beginning of the present century, two bards of great poetic gifts flourished in the neighbourhood of Inverness. They were Christian laymen—one an agent of the Society already referred to, and the other a weaver. Their names were William Mackenzie and Donald Macrae. Their poems constitute the great bulk of a volume entitled "*The Sacred Poetry of the North.*" The productions of the former are of a mediocre character ; but the poetry of the latter evinces powers of the highest order.

Macrae combines the spiritual insight and holy sympathies of George Herbert with the tuneful subtlety of Shelley. His spiritualising faculty is exceedingly keen—his analysis and allegorical descriptions of his Christian experience being so profound and mystical, that ordinary simple Christian minds utterly fail to understand them. In him we have a poetic embodiment of that spirit of severe subjectivity—of unsparing self-anatomy—which to this day characterises the Christianity of the North of Scotland.

Towards the end of last century a young minister, the Rev. James Macgregor, a native of Perthshire, was sent by the Associate Synod as a missionary to Nova Scotia, to labour among his countrymen. He was full of apostolic zeal and earnestness, and by all legitimate means sought the lasting good of his fellowmen. Finding that no literature of a religious kind circulated among the Gaelic-speaking inhabitants, he composed and published a small collection of hymns, which soon became very popular. They are simple evangelical sermons in smooth-flowing verse, and have been of greater benefit to the multitude than productions of a more pretending order. In recognition of his arduous and successful labours in the colonies, the University of Glasgow conferred on him the degree of D.D. Dr. Macgregor's poems are still very highly esteemed by his countrymen in the great Dominion of the West.

Next to Dugald Buchanan, the author whose hymns are best and most widely known is the late Peter Grant, a Baptist minister in Strathspey, who published the first edition of his hymns as early as 1813. As he tells in one of his poems, he was deeply impressed with the large extent of practical heathenism among the Highlanders. He complains, as Bishop Carsuel in the sixteenth century did before him, that the Highlanders loved the poetic tales of Fingal and Ossian more than the Gospel, and that they spent all their spare time in the recital of these vain heathen stories. Carsuel gave his own generation a Gaelic

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Liturgy, and Grant gave to his a series of Gospel hymns ; and it need scarcely be asked which of them was the more successful. The hymns immediately became widely popular, and edition after edition was called for ; and such was the hold they got among the people, that they have maintained their popularity to the present day. Grant is not very powerful as a poet, but he is very sweet as a singer. His hymns have about them a sort of holy fragrance that captivates and retains the spirit of devotion. The simplicity of the conception and the naturalness of the style at once affect and enchain the heart. Grant succeeds where a hymnist of more ambition and power would fail. The warmth of his earnest nature is felt in every stanza that he has written. He died some time ago, crowned with years and honours, beloved by all who knew him, mourned by thousands whose souls benefited by the holy strains of his poetry.

Perhaps of all those who have composed Gaelic hymns the best known outside the bounds of the Highlands is the Rev. Dr. John Macdonald, of Ferintosh, otherwise known as "The Apostle of the North." As an orator, preacher, and evangelist, no man of his day in Scotland was the instrument of greater good than he to his countrymen, by whom his memory will be warmly cherished for generations. His poetical works were published in a neat volume in 1846. The longer poems are biographical, the character outlines being the threads along which he conveys, in glowing eloquent language, the lessons of the Cross for daily life. The most popular of his compositions is one entitled "The Christian," which is divided into three parts—*to*, *at*, and *beyond* Jordan. He who wrote the following could not recommend Christianity to his fellowmen as a religion of gloom :—

"He often sought for special grace
At mercy's fountain free,
To keep up aye a cheerful face
Hard though the heart might be.

And by that smile of happiness—
That fragrance sweet he found—
He helped a holy cheerfulness
In all the saints around.

He hated all hypocrisies,
The silent face of gloom,
The moaning and the plaintive sighs
That savour of the tomb.

But the sweet breath of life he knew
Amidst the tainted air ;
Heart-brokenness that came to view,
Would have his tender care."

In much of Dr. Macdonald's poetry we detect the style and the eloquence of the preacher. It is rich with the ripe fruits of Christian experience. He is the Keble of the Highlands. As much of the

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charm of his glowing verse consists in his inimitable phraseology, it is very difficult to present his poems in a poetical dress in English. A distinguished divine who attempted a translation of some of his stanzas succeeded only in producing very painful prose. The following verses describe the Christian on the

“BANKS OF THE JORDAN.

I hear the floods of Jordan roll,
My flesh is seized with dread ;
But shame shall ne'er approach my soul,
By hope of Heaven led.
That hope the Rock of Ages showed
To those that went before,
Who safely trod the sacred road
That leads to Canaan's shore.

My spirit trembles with affright
As down to death I go ;
Around me glide the shades of night,
And weary doubtings grow.
Before is an eternity
Unreckoned by our years—
The shoreless and the boundless sea
That wakens shrinking fears.

But on the Christ my eye doth rest—
I trust His gracious power ;
He succoured me when sore distress'd,
He'll save me in that hour.
Yea, He a help will yet provide
While I am on this shore ;
The waters great He will divide
Till Jordan I am o'er.”

The beginning of the third part of the poem runs thus :—

“That Christian who once fearful stood
Where high the waters swell'd,
Lamenting there before the flood
Corruption still unquell'd,
Has entered now into that rest
Whose light aye filled his eye—
His spirit, now in glory drest,
Surrounds the throne on high.”

A casual sermon by Dr. Macdonald in Harris, on his way to visit the lonely St. Kilda, was the means of converting John Morrison, a blacksmith, subsequently a Free Church catechist. Morrison is one of the most powerful and ingenious of the Celtic bards. Like Macrae of Petty he is much given to the analysis of his Christian experience—the examination of the varied moods and states of soul in which the highly exercised believer finds himself. I do not know in any language a poem like his *Duin' og is seann Duin' agam* in its subtlety of conceptions, its felicity of expression, and its cunning weavings and turnings of verses. Its

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theme is the "holy war" in the Christian soul, which he treats in quite an original fashion. Morrison's poetry shows that he was profoundly exercised and interested in the spiritual problems and difficulties of the Christian life. Few men ever obtained a deeper insight into the human heart; and fewer still possessed equal poetic gifts for uttering what they had seen and felt.

The late Rev. Duncan MacLean of Glenorchay, is the last of the great religious bards of the Highlands. Buchanan, Macrae, Morrison, and he are the foremost names on the roll. Grant and Macdonald are more popular than the last three, but their poetry is not of so high an order. A keenly æsthetic spirit pervades all the productions of MacLean. He is exceedingly rich in poetic illustration, and very profound in his lines of thought. The reader discerns at once that he was a man of wide general culture; and that he brought the fruits of it with him into the sphere of Gaelic religious poetry. He is always in full sympathy with man and the works of creation. But like Morrison and Macrae he is too analytical for the popular taste. His countrymen highly appreciated his eloquent ministrations in their native tongue in the pulpit; but they do not appear to have understood that there was such a deep mine of fresh and original thought in his poetry. The following lines, in one of the less spiritual of his poems, remind us of Wordsworth, whom MacLean somewhat resembles in his keen sympathies with external nature, and interpretation of its moods:—

"Loch Tay there I see with a beautiful shade
On its bosom that's pure as the breast of a maid—
Like a child in sweet rest, in its fairy bed laid;
Touch gently its locks ere its glory may fade.

Glen Dochart, Glen Lochy, are bright to the view;
With their corries of green when their dress they renew;
With the shadowy nooks where the streamlet fast rushes;
Where you hear the gay chorus of robins and thrushes.

All changeless I see them,—hill, river, and road;
But where are the people that once there abode?
Some rest in their graves 'neath the slumberous sod,
But the many are scattered o'er ocean abroad."

There is a considerable body of religious poetry from the pens of minor bards who published during the last fifty years; but with the exception of a few of Macdougall's hymns their works are scarcely known at all among the people. In connection with this subject there is one work that deserves very particular notice—the excellent translation of the Psalms in metre. The solemn lines of the Gaelic Psalm Book, as well as the rich flow of the renderings of the paraphrases, are engraven on the heart of pious Highlanders. These sacred productions, so beautifully and skilfully translated into the native tongue, which is found to be so natural a medium, cast all human efforts into the shade; and are indeed the despair of the religious bard, who feels that even

genius of the highest order can compose nothing that can be classed with the Psalms. The Gaelic Psalter came from the hands of men of culture, who were poets themselves of more than mediocre talents, such as the highly accomplished Dr. John Smith of Campbelton. The excellence and naturalness of the metrical translation of the Book of Psalms have no doubt helped to make the Highlanders so utterly indifferent to hymns of human authorship in public worship. Certainly no one has yet been able to produce a collection of Gaelic hymns, although several have been published, which can be spoken of as at all fit for use in the ordinary services of the sanctuary.

It only now remains to make a remark or two on the lines of thought which this brief survey of Gaelic sacred poetry suggests.

First, let us note the fact that, from the days of Patrick and Columba, a stream of Christian sentiment and devotion has flowed down through fourteen centuries to the present day in the Highlands. It may sometimes have been insignificant, or even have disappeared from view; but it has never run dry. Battles, bloodshed, and external changes have no doubt affected its course, and sometimes concealed it from our view; but still it flowed on, whether pouring over the cascade or latent in the bosom of the valleys. And now, undisturbed, we can trace its channel to its source along the sequestered base of the great mountains.

In the second place, it is worthy of remark that the religious poetry of the Highlands has assumed more the form of poems than that of hymns. At the same time, it is thoroughly lyrical—a characteristic of the Celtic mind observable in all its literary productions. In the matter of length, the religious bards followed the example of the secular in their popular songs. And, no doubt, this helps to explain why the native hymns have been but little appreciated, because unsuited for public worship.

And lastly, religious mysticism, to which the Celtic genius naturally is no stranger, can be detected in the works of Macrae, Matheson, and Morrison. Their poetry preserves memorials of a development of the Christian life which has been for more than a century peculiar to the north of Scotland, but which is now in course of extinction under the pressure of an all-assimilative theological education and the highly cosmopolitan tendencies of the present age.

N. MACNEILL.

REVISION OF THE DIRECTORY FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.*

THE Directory was prepared by the Westminster Assembly, for the orderly conducting of the Public Worship of God, and the due celebration of Sacraments and occasional services in the Presbyterian Church. It was a becoming thing to have a rubric for common prayer and other public exercises of religion. Rules were divinely given to the Hebrew Church, which were to be strictly adhered to in the worship of God. When the Old Testament ritual was abrogated by the New Testament dispensation, the apostles counselled that all things should be done "decently and in order" in the public assemblies of the congregations. In the progress of time the corruption of religion multiplied unscriptural ceremonies, until a Reformation was needed to relieve the burdened consciences of Christian people. But the Reformers did not neglect the orderly arrangements of protestant services in the public worship of God. The most radical and presbyterian of them all—JOHN KNOX—introduced the Book of Common Order which had been used at Geneva, with a few changes adapting it to the state of Scotland. The General Assembly, in 1564, ordained "that every minister, exhorter, and reader, shall have one of the Psalm Books lately printed in Edinburgh, and use the Order contained therein in Prayers, Marriage, and ministration of the Sacraments." In 1562, the General Assembly ordained "that an uniform Order should be kept in ministration of the Sacraments, solemnization of Marriages, and Burial of the Dead, according to the Book of Geneva." This Book was expressly approved by the First Book of Discipline framed in 1560. This order was not to hinder free prayer, the minister being at liberty to enlarge or contract the service according to his discretion. It continued in use, more or less, for one hundred years. The principles involved were thus clearly stated:—"In the Church, as in the House of God, it becometh all things to be done decently and in order; not that we think that any policy and an order in ceremonies can be appointed for all ages, times, and places; for as ceremonies, such as men have devised, are but temporal, so may and ought they to be changed, when they rather foster superstition than edify the Church using the same."†

The Book of Common Order was never formally abolished by the General Assembly; but it was superseded by the approval and use of the Directory, prepared by the Westminster Assembly, as a means of securing uniformity in public religious services throughout the United Kingdom.

* Read at the Intercolonial Presbyterian Conference at Sydney, Australia, 1882.

† Article XX. First Scottish *Confession of Faith*.

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The Westminster Assembly, while engaged in revising the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, received an order from both Houses of Parliament, at once to confer together upon a "discipline and government as may be most agreeable to God's Holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad . . . and touching and concerning the Directory for Worship, or Liturgy, hereafter to be in the Church, &c."

After discussing Government and Discipline at great length and with much care, the Assembly resolved, on the motion of the celebrated Samuel Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, to proceed with the Directory for the Public Worship of God.

From May to December of 1644, the Directory occupied the attention of the Assembly, and was at length completed. The English Parliament sanctioned it in January 1645. On February 3rd, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ratified and approved of it, and ordained that it be carefully and uniformly observed and practised by all the ministers; that a printed copy be kept for every Kirk in the Kingdom; and that every Presbytery should have a printed copy, and take special notice of its observance or neglect in every Congregation. The General Assembly, however, added this note:—"Provided always, That the clause in the Directory of the administration of the Lord's Supper which mentioneth the communicants sitting about the table, or at it, be not interpreted as if, in the judgment of this Kirk, it were indifferent, and free for any of the communicants not to come to, and receive at the table; or as if we did not approve the distributing of the elements by the minister to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves." It is also provided "that this shall be no prejudice to the order and practice of this Kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the Books of Discipline, and Acts of General Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory."

Three days after the Assembly's approval, the Parliament of Scotland ratified and established the Directory, and it became thereafter the authorised guide in conducting all parts of public worship at ordinary and extraordinary times.

The Directory refers to the following subjects in connection with the public worship of God:—1. The Assembly of the Congregation; 2. The Public Reading of the Holy Scripture; 3. The Public Prayer before Sermon; 4. The Preaching of the Word; 5. The Prayer after Sermon; 6. The Sacrament of Baptism; 7. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; 8. The Sanctification of the Sabbath; 9. The Solemnisation of Marriage; 10. The Visitation of the Sick; 11. The Burial of the Dead; 12. Public Solemn Fasting; 13. The Observance of Days of Public Thanksgiving; 14. The Singing of Psalms; 15. An

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Appendix touching Days and Places of Public Worship. The Directory contains no forms of prayer, but gives minute suggestions for guidance in prayer, as well as for the celebration of all acts of public worship.

We shall now notice in detail some of its provisions.

I.—THE READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

The Directory recommends the public reading of portions from both Old and New Testaments at each diet of worship, and that all the Canonical Books be read in order, but that the Book of Psalms, and such parts as are thought best for edification, be read more frequently than other parts; and when the minister expounds any part of what is read, "that it be not done till the whole is read, and that regard be always had unto the time, that neither preaching nor other ordinances be straitened or rendered tedious." This excellent rule is to be observed in all other public performances. Reading of Scripture and preaching are also, with the permission of the Presbytery, to be allowed occasionally to such as intend the ministry.

II.—PRAYERS IN THE CONGREGATION.

This matter is dealt with very fully by the Directory. The service was to begin with prayer, as is done in Holland still in the use of the *Votum*. A second and longer prayer was to be offered before sermon, and a third after sermon. It is also stated that, "because the prayer which Christ taught His disciples is not only a pattern of prayer, but itself a most comprehensive prayer, we recommend it also to be used in the prayers of the Church." Thus the Directory recommends four prayers at each service of public worship. In the specific counsels it directs that public prayer should comprehend confession, petition and thanksgiving, and that intercession should be made for all ranks and conditions of men, for royal persons, the government, the state, the city and its rulers, the judges and magistrates, the reformed churches and local churches, the universities and schools, the Christian ministry, the afflicted; also for seasonable weather and fruitful seasons, etc., etc.

Nothing is said about posture in public prayer. The practice of standing, so long followed in Scotland, is gradually giving way, even among Presbyterians, in many parts of the world, if not also in Scotland and Ireland.

A few words may be added in reference to public prayers. As forms are not used or even encouraged by our Church in public worship, much study and care should be devoted to proper preparation for this part of the service of God. Presbyterian ministers generally prepare their sermons carefully, but their prayers are, in many cases, the least attractive and satisfactory part of the exercise. Many good preachers have been deficient in public prayer. It is said that President Davies, Robert Hall, and Dr. Chalmers were so, and few greater preachers can

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be named. Dr. Witherspoon tells of Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow, who, in his judgment, excelled any man he had heard in the excellency of his prayers, that he was accustomed to devote unwearied pains to prepare for this part of his ministerial work; and that, for the first ten years of his pastoral life, he never composed a sermon without writing a prayer appropriate to it. This was Calvin's habit, as may be seen from the prayers prefixed to his printed sermons. Dr. Chalmers also wrote out prayers to be used before delivering his lectures to theological students. Prayers in the congregation should be more frequent and shorter than they have commonly been in Presbyterian churches in some parts of the world.

III.—OF SINGING OF PSALMS.

The Directory is remarkably concise on this part of public worship. Four sentences at the end are all that is given to it. These recognise the duty of praise, and direct that the voice be tunably and gravely ordered, and that every one should have a psalm book. As readers, especially in England, were very few, the Directory enjoins that, for the present, "it is convenient that the minister, or some other appointed by him, and the other ruling officers, do read the psalm line by line, before the singing thereof." This innovation laid an embargo on the progress of sacred music in the Presbyterian Church for nearly 200 years. It even became so common a practice, that, though people could read, some judged it a great cause of offence to discontinue the objectionable practice.

There is great room for revision of the Directory on praise. As this is the only part of public worship in which Presbyterian people audibly join, it is most important that it should be well directed, carefully cultivated, and used more frequently than has hitherto been customary. The Church of Scotland took a step backward in its "Service of Song in the House of the Lord" after the Westminster Assembly, and the introduction of the Directory. The music and psalter of the Reformed Church were full of variety, and were printed together, so that the Psalm-book was also the tune-book. The people eagerly caught their new part in the public worship, and became well-skilled in singing Psalms. Calderwood records, in his "History of the Church," that when John Dury, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who had been banished by the Duke of Lennox, was restored to his charge after the Raid of Ruthven in 1582, the people went out to meet him in crowds. They then returned with their minister, with uncovered heads, singing the old version of the hundred and twenty-fourth Psalm in four parts, known to most of the people! This is a feat which probably no crowd of two thousand people, even in Edinburgh, could perform at the present day with that old version.

The revised Directory should enjoin more particularly the duty of thorough education in sacred music, so that, as at the period of the

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Reformation, all the congregation may sing the songs of Zion to the appropriate tunes set for them in the Book of Praise. "It is not easy," says Dr. Van Oosterzee in his 'Practical Theology,' "to estimate too highly the value of Christian song in public worship. It is, with prayer and thanksgiving, the noblest expression of the awakened religious feeling: a solemn accord in words and feeling on the part of the Assembly, in the domain of the highest and the holiest; a common homage to God and the Redeemer, well pleasing unto Him, and of inestimable blessing to the singers themselves." Much remains to be done in this department of religious worship, and the praises offered by congregations should be fuller and more frequent than hitherto in Presbyterian Churches.

IV.—THE SPECIAL SERVICES IN RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

The Directory takes up these in order, and gives excellent counsels on the proper mode of conducting most of them.

1. THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM.

This service is admirably set forth, but with respect to the baptism of infants only; and the words of instruction given are so appropriate that they might be read *verbatim* at the service, a thing which is almost encouraged by the note—"in these and like instructions." The Scriptural authority and meaning of Baptism, the place occupied by the children of professing Christians, and the true worth of the sacrament are very clearly taught. It is particularly noted, though too often lost sight of, that children of believers "are Christians, and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptized." The order of administering baptism is:—1. Instructions; 2. Address to the parent, requiring of his solemn promise for the performance of his duty; 3. Prayer before administration for a blessing on the sacred ordinance; 4. Naming the child, pronouncing the Baptismal Formula, and, as the words are spoken, applying the water; 5. Prayer after baptism. Ordinarily in Presbyterian Churches, the child is held up by the father, and not taken into the officiating minister's arms, though this is occasionally done in some places. The Directory enjoins that before baptism, "the Minister is to demand the name of the child, which being told him, he is to say, *calling the child by his name*, I baptize thee." Is it not strange therefore that there should be ministers of the Presbyterian Church who refuse to use the Christian name of the child, and unnecessarily hurt the feelings of parents, who have given him a Christian name by which he is to be called? Even in the Old Testament, the name was openly given at the celebration of the Sacrament of Circumcision, as in John the Baptist's, and in our Lord's own case.

2. THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The Directory is very happy and explicit in its regulations for admin-

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istering this Sacrament. The order is that, after sermon, there should be ; 1. The Exhortation to the communicants. 2. Words of Institution. 3. Prayer, thanksgiving, or blessing of the bread and wine. 4. Words of administration and act of Communion, first with the bread, and then with the wine. 5. Post Communion address. 6. Thanksgiving. The only suggestion that seems necessary is, that the Words of institution may most appropriately begin the Communion Service. The Prayer, in this order, is in its proper place, immediately before distributing the elements.

The frequency of celebrating the Lord's Supper is left to the discretion of the minister and other church-governors of each congregation. It was quarterly in the Reformed Church of Scotland. But it became a practice to observe it only once a year in many parishes. The time suggested is after the morning service. There is nothing unscriptural in Evening Communion ; but it is unusual in Presbyterian Churches.

The Directory does not encourage Private Communion, or Private Baptisms. The latter have been, and continues to prevail, but they should be regulated. The Lord's Supper has been very rarely administered in private by Presbyterian ministers in Scotland ; and when any minister has done so, it has occasioned much animadversion and heartburning. The Presbyterian Church of America—which is the largest of all, embracing some five thousand congregations, has, however, revised the Directory on this point in these words :—"The Standards of the Presbyterian Church are clear in their teaching that the Lord's Supper is not to be received by one alone, yet, in cases of protracted sickness or approaching death, when the desire is strongly urged by a member of the Church (whether previously so, or by recent confession and baptism), to enjoy the administration of the Lord's Supper, a pastor, with one or more of his session, and such communicants as may appropriately be admitted, may proceed to administer this Sacrament, a minute of every such act to be entered on the records of the session." How many Presbyterian ministers have been asked by Christians of the very highest type, who, perhaps, have been bedridden for years, why they should not be allowed to remember Christ's death in the Lord's Supper ? The reply *Non possumus* has been painful to the sufferer. At the same time it must not be forgotten that Private Communion has a controversial history, and as this was the subject of one of the Five Articles of Perth, it has associations which have hitherto discouraged it in Scottish Presbyterian Churches. The variation introduced by the American Church is worthy of candid and serious consideration in revising the Directory.

Nothing is said about Fast-days and other days of public worship in connection with the administration of the Lord's Supper. It is recommended that "on the previous Sabbath, or some day of that week, something concerning that ordinance, and the due preparation there-

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unto and participation thereof be taught." The accompanying days in Scotland are historic, and arose out of special circumstances. They have associations of many spiritual impressions which have hallowed them in the memory. Even there, however, they have almost outlived their public usefulness, and it is not found possible to keep them as they were wont to be observed. A preparatory service is a very becoming exercise on one or more convenient occasions previous to the Communion. At one of these, new Communicants should be received, but in some Presbyterian Churches they are formally received on the previous Sabbath. The simultaneous communicating, now so common, brings this service within reasonable limit, and by shortening other parts, and omitting the fencing of the tables,—which, if done formally, should be done the Sabbath before,—the administration of the Lord's Supper may be brought within the ordinary limits of a diet of worship. This is now done in many Presbyterian Churches throughout the world; but where the communicants are many, the Communion is celebrated in the afternoon. This gives opportunity for longer addresses. But in mixed communities, where Presbyterians are fewer, it is most expedient to have the Communion Service comprehended within the morning diet of public worship.

3. THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE.

The Directory gives excellent suggestions regarding the performance of this service. Though marriage is a civil contract, it should be religiously celebrated, and in a becoming and orderly manner. The Directory seems to take it for granted that marriages are to be celebrated in the church, as had been the case in England; and this is one of the evidences of the English composition of the Directory. In Scotland marriages are hardly ever celebrated in Presbyterian churches, though the practice has been reintroduced. Any day, except a day of public humiliation, is regarded as suitable, but the Directory suggests that it be not the Lord's Day. The order of marriage is as follows: 1. Prayer; 2. Address; 3. Call for objections, if any; 4. Parties requested to join hands, and to repeat words after minister; 5. Pronouncing them to be husband and wife; 6. Prayer for a blessing on the union. Nothing is said about the time-honoured wedding-ring; but, as its use is so common, it is proper that when the minister pronounces the parties to be man and wife, he should ask the husband to put the ring on the left hand of his wife. Thereafter he should offer prayer and pronounce the benediction.

It may be added that whatever preliminary declarations are, by the laws of the country, required to be made by persons about to be married, these ought invariably to be made before the religious ceremony is commenced. And after the marriage service the parties and witnesses should at once sign the certificates and register.

4. THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

This part of the Directory is admirable, and ought to be kept in its integrity.

5. THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

At the time of the Westminster Assembly a general feeling prevailed among its members against the use of any religious service at funerals. A committee was appointed on the subject; a debate ensued after their report was brought up, and the report was recommitted for consideration. It was then passed as it is printed. The use of forms must have been greatly abused among Protestant Christians in England to necessitate so radical a change as the prohibition of any religious service, even reading of Scripture, or singing of Psalms at the burial of the dead. Even the attendance of a minister is not required. One of the members remarked in the course of the debate that the Directory was for worship, but how this would fall under that he did not know. If a minister might exhort at a funeral, he thought word and prayer might go together. So rigid an arrangement at the solemn work of burial could scarcely be expected to continue; and though Presbyterians in Scotland complied with the Directory, yet it gradually became a custom to have two prayers at the house before the removal of the body. Occasionally, prayer is offered at the grave. In England and the Colonies, and in America, where Presbyterians mix with other evangelical Christians, all of whom hold a religious service at the grave, it has been found to be expedient and becoming to adopt a similar practice.

There is surely need for a revision of the Directory in this matter. The practice of having prayer and reading a passage of Scripture at the house is becoming. At the grave a few verses of Scripture appropriate to the occasion should be read, and prayer offered, closing with the benediction. And, in cases when it is judged expedient, a short address may be given before prayer. It was hinted at the Westminster Assembly, that, previous to any address, the corpse should be laid in the grave, as is customary.

In Scotland, after the Reformation, a Psalm was sometimes sung at the burial of the dead. Dr. Horatius Bonar has published an old Funeral Hymn in use at that period. This is a beautiful custom, though not always convenient. In Germany, as is well known, a hymn gives a great interest and solemnity to a funeral service.

THE DEFECTS OF THE DIRECTORY.

These may be thus summarised:—

1. It is not sufficiently explicit in the orderly arrangement of the service for the public worship of God.

2. There is not a sufficient provision for the service of song, the order prescribed being confessedly temporary, and adapted to popular ignorance.

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3. There is no provision for the public reception of communicants or for adult baptisms.

4. It is very defective in reference to religious services at the burial of the dead.

5. There is no supply of specimen forms, especially of such as might be used in the Army or Navy, or by Colonists far away, for public religious services.

A revised Directory would be a great benefit to the Presbyterian Churches holding the Westminster Confession ; and it should be issued in a popular form as a Hand-book, so as to be easily accessible. A copy, as ordered by the General Assembly in Edinburgh, in 1645, should be in every Church, and in the hands of office-bearers. Such a republication would be hailed by the younger ministers of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, and especially by those who are in Colonies and in Foreign Countries, and its use would tend to make our public services of religious worship more orderly, more satisfactory, and more edifying. If the combined wisdom and practical experience of members of the General Presbyterian Council belonging to the English-speaking Churches could prepare a Draft Directory, it might meet with general acceptance.

APPENDIX ON FORMS OF PRAYER.

A Book of Common Order was used in Scotland, as on the Continent, after the Reformation. The Westminster Assembly discussed the propriety of having a few forms of Prayer, to be used in Universities and elsewhere. A Committee was appointed to consider the matter, but nothing official came out of it. Many disliked all forms ; but the "chief oracles, both of Parliament and the Assembly, though advocates for *extempore* devotion, were not disposed to leave ministers altogether to their own impulses in conducting public devotion. They adopted a middle course, and whilst abandoning particular forms of Prayer, they provided a General Directory of Worship."* There was, however, a book published at that very period, under this title :—"A Supply of Prayer for the Ships that want Ministers to pray with them." The Navy at that time had a Presbyterian Lord High Admiral. The Prayers prepared were expressly said to be "agreeing with the Directory established by Parliament." It is not known by whom these forms were composed, but they are Presbyterian in spirit. Psalms and chapters from Holy Scripture are prescribed, and the forms of prayer are merely given as specimens and guides. This is exactly what is wanted for others besides seamen. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland issued, in 1863, a Book of Prayers, with directions for use at public worship when no minister was present, and forms were added for Colonists, for Burials, as well as for Family Worship, and for the Sick. This has met with much acceptance in India and the Colonies. A

* Stoughton's "Religion in England," i. 394.

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Society in Scotland issued also a work entitled "Euchologius," containing specimen forms, a new edition of which has been published. Dr. Archibald A. Hodge, of Princeton Theological Seminary, America, lately published a Manual of Forms for Occasional Services, such as baptisms, admission of communicants, marriages, and funerals. It is brief, suggestive, and very handy. It is weakest and least satisfactory, however, in the part on the Burial of the Dead. And in no case does it supply forms of prayer. The Rev. A. J. Campbell of Geelong, Victoria, prepared a Book of Forms suitable for Public Worship by people far from a minister, and containing a few other forms. This volume has been recommended by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and also by the second Intercolonial Presbyterian Conference. All these are worthy of study.

ROBERT STEEL.

THE PARENTS OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

MR. CARLYLE was hardly correct in speaking as he does of his father, James Carlyle, the mason, as "*ultimus Romanorum*—perhaps among Scottish peasants what Samuel Johnson was among English authors." . . . "He was among the last of the true men, whom Scotland, on the old system, produced, or can produce; a man healthy in body and mind, fearing God, and diligently working on God's earth with contentment, hope, and unwearied resolution." Six years before the birth of the younger Carlyle, one Neil Livingstone had come into the world in a far off islet of the Hebrides lashed by the fierce Atlantic; and Neil Livingstone was as true a Roman as James Carlyle. The race of Scottish peasants, moiling in the dust for a bare living, but with souls that rose to heaven, hearts that communed with God, and "thoughts that travelled to eternity," survived longer than Mr. Carlyle thought. There were men not much older than himself whose lives were destined to be as true as his father's, and whose sons, rivalling Carlyle even in fame, to say nothing of solid work, would revere their memory with a devotion as profound as his own. The pious wish to which he gave expression when his father died, was shared in like circumstances by others of his countrymen—"So shall he still live even here in me, and his worth plant itself honestly forth into new generations." The parents of David Livingstone, as much as those of Thomas Carlyle, were of this order of Nature's nobles.

In writing the "Personal Life" of David Livingstone, the present writer came to know more of his father's worth and ways than it was possible for him to make use of in the limits of that book. He ventures to think that a short account of him and some of his relatives will not be uninteresting to the readers of *The Catholic Presbyterian*. Though in

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middle life he left the Presbyterian Church, he exemplified in a remarkable way the true spirit and the best traditions of the old religious life of Scotland. In the words of Wordsworth,

"The Scottish Church both on himself and those
With whom from childhood he grew up, had held
The strong hand of her purity,"

and made him an admirable sample both of the culture and the nobility of earnest religion.

The grandfather of David Livingstone left Ulva in 1792, when Neil was three years old, and settled at Blantyre, near Glasgow, on the banks of the Clyde. He had several sons, most of whom joined the army or the navy during the excitement of the French War. The life they led was not very favourable to steady habits, and Neil, the only civilian among them, saw, to his great distress, that conviviality was proving the snare of his brothers. It was in the hope of exercising a good influence at their weak point that he became a teetotaler, persevering in that habit with unswerving regularity to the end of his days. It is not easy now to understand the social outlawry which this involved. So little was this self-denial appreciated, that even his mother, good woman though she was, hardly understood it; and he used to say that he never knew a bitterer feeling than at his father's funeral, when he took the glass of whisky from his mother's hands and passed it on untasted—appearing at once to outrage the memory of the dead, and to offer an affront to the guests of the family. It showed, however, that his force of will and power of self-denial were of no common kind; and it foreshadowed not a little of the same sort in the career of his son.

From his earliest days he had a passion for books. His father encouraged the taste, and would sometimes bring him a literary treasure. One day, while he was romping as a boy with his companions, his father put into his hands a publication of the late Rev. John Campbell, of Kingsland; it riveted the boy; he plunged into it at once, and read on without stopping to the last page. The book made a great impression on him, and helped to form the thoughtful yet enterprising temper that characterised him. His occupation, though humble, was of a kind that encouraged thoughtfulness and the exercise of intellect—he began life as a tailor. He had been baptised and brought up in the parish church, but the minister of Blantyre being rather extreme in some points of Calvinistic theology, he left him, and ultimately joined the Independents. Among them, and in the community at large, he was held in high esteem. He was one of those marked men who, to a blameless character, added a most undeviating attendance in the House of God. There were many families in those days with whom it was a point of honour that no member should ever, except under the direst necessity, be absent from church; and as such things as holidays or absence from home were almost unknown, and headaches and colds were

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little thought of, from year's end to year's end they were always to be seen in their pew.

David Livingstone's mother, as has been said elsewhere, was of a Lowland family, distinguished, like that of his father, for high integrity and consistent godliness. Her maternal grandfather was that Gavin Hunter, of whom it is recorded that he was sent to Hamilton jail for the inexcusable crime of writing a petition to the minister of Shotts, craving an increase to the parochial allowance of a poor old woman, who had only sixpence a month from the parish! It was intolerable that a travelling tailor should presume to intermeddle in such matters. Perhaps the case of the old woman was not quite so extreme as it appears. In the olden days of Scotland, before the present Poor Law was introduced, against the vehement remonstrances of Dr. Chalmers, the parochial allowance in country parishes was far from furnishing a living. Neighbours were kind to the poor; a bag of meal or potatoes was often sent along by a friendly farmer; a few fowls picked up a living at the cottage door, and even a cow might contrive to live. When the present writer was minister of a country parish before the Disruption, an allowance from the church-door collections of five shillings a month was the usual rate, and complaints were hardly known. "It's no' an uphaud, it's an eke," remarked an old-fashioned elder, meaning that it was not intended to uphold or sustain the pauper, but only to add a little to other means. But sixpence was a most beggarly sum.

Gavin Hunter followed the practice, common in his day, of going to the houses of the neighbouring lairds and farmers to make their clothes. There was much less diversity of social rank then than now; even lairds indulged in an easy familiarity, of which we have a graphic picture in some of the tales of Sir Walter Scott. Family worship was very generally observed in the lairds' houses frequented by Gavin Hunter, but their reading power was sometimes limited, and their comments peculiar. A laird, in reading Exodus xxvi. 14, where it is said that "badgers' skins" were to be used in constructing the curtains of the tabernacle, read "beggars' skins," but sought to soften the apparent harshness by remarking that it was not the skins of ordinary beggars that were meant, but "Rawney beggars or tinkers,"—a much inferior lot.

Gavin Hunter was a devout man, and one of the early Seceders, not very acceptable, therefore, to the parish minister. He used to walk a long distance to his place of worship—a long Sabbath-day's journey. Like many more of the Seceders, he did not draw to Whitefield and the revival that came with him; once, at Cambuslang, he heard the men crying out and the women going into hysterics, and came away, saying, "The Evil One has got among them." Very likely old James Carlyle would have taken a similar view. The old style of religion rested firmly on the intellect and the conscience, keeping the emotions well down;

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and when under Whitefield the emotions came out in a sort of tumultuous gush, the old people could not understand it.

Gavin Hunter had a son named David, the grandfather and name-father of the traveller. His wife's name was Moffat; she was a connection of a family as poor as herself in those days, afterwards millionaires—the Bairds of Gartsherrie. The first part of David Hunter's life was more prosperous than the last. After the death of his wife he took up his residence at Blantyre, where he followed his father's craft. Neil Livingstone became his apprentice, and afterwards his son-in-law. David Hunter's religious impressions began at an open air service conducted by one of the Erskines who headed the first Secession. The snow was falling that day, and before the sermon ended the congregation were standing in it up to the ankles; but David Hunter's heart was too much engrossed to let him have any feeling of cold. He lived to the age of eighty-seven, a kind of theological patriarch, respected by the community, and a favourite with his grandchildren, including the traveller, whom he allowed to rummage freely among his books, most of which, however, were in the theological line. His son-in-law used to speak of him as a remarkable exemplification of the ninety-second Psalm—fearing the Lord from his youth, and fresh and fruitful in old age.

Neil Livingstone and Agnes Hunter were married in 1810, and took up house on the south side of Glasgow, then a neighbourhood of green fields. But times were bad, work was scarce, and the moral atmosphere was not what they had been used to. They returned to Blantyre, where five sons and two daughters were born to them, two of the sons dying in infancy. Mrs. Livingstone was an excellent housekeeper, cooked well, was neat and tidy in all her ways, kept things wonderfully respectable, and had some touches of refinement that rather offended her neighbours. Her boys were better dressed than most, had even frills round their necks, a refinement that some neighbours laughed at, but in which Mrs. Livingstone persisted. The meals were served with undeviating punctuality, and were always comfortable. These ways of his mother clung to the traveller, and were always remembered with respectful gratitude. Even when a student in London, he would sigh for the meals he got at home; and when he married in Africa it was one of his matters of congratulation that his house now was as his mother's had been.

Mrs. Livingstone was in hearty sympathy with her husband, not only in matters of religion, but in the ways which he took to promote it in his family and his neighbourhood. Family worship was held by him morning and evening. Those of the children who worked at Blantyre Mill had but three quarters of an hour for breakfast; but as soon as the meal was over (they were never kept waiting for it) Neil Livingstone read a chapter and offered prayer. At evening worship, when they were less hurried, besides reading and prayer, a psalm was sung.

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Both father and mother were remarkable for purity of speech ; no coarse word was ever heard in the house. Slang was not allowed ; even the word "awful" was discouraged. They had such a rigid sense of truth, that they did not like a thing to be called awful when it was not awful ; and the habit reappeared in David's remarkable care to avoid exaggeration and keep within the truth in all his statements.

Neil Livingstone was kind and genial, but quick-tempered ; the Highland blood would readily boil. One of his daughters was present at the incident mentioned in the Introduction to the "Missionary Travels," when David for the last time had "the rod" applied by his father for refusing to read a theological book. She heard her father ask him to read something, and he rose apparently to obey ; but the next moment her father had seized a stick, and was laying it on his shoulders. She was in great distress, and burst into tears, for she had never before seen David in disgrace. By-and-by her father softened, and said they had all been wrong. David had been obstinate and disobedient (instead of "Wilberforce's Practical View," he had taken up a volume of travels) ; she had been wrong to cry so, and they ought all to ask forgiveness. She went to the room where David was, and tried to bring him round. It was not an easy task. At last something that she said seemed to bring out overpoweringly the comical side of the transaction ; he threw back his head and shook with laughter. It was an original and very effective way of relieving his sister's distress on account of his disgrace.

Though father and son had quarrelled on this occasion over books, their views on the subject of reading were not very divergent after all. It was about the time when missionary enterprise was in the dew of its youth, and missionary literature fresh and very attractive. Neil Livingstone and his family caught the mission fever. Neil himself founded a Missionary Society, and a Missionary Prayer Meeting in Blantyre, and bought or borrowed as many Missionary books as he could lay his hands on. "Henry Martyn's Life," the "Researches of Claudius Buchanan," the works and lives of Judson, Newell, Carey, and others were familiar to all the household. What had first kindled his interest in Missions, was an account he read of the Moravian Missions. Martyn, Judson, Carey, Zinzendorf were the heroes of the family, along with Wallace and Bruce, John Knox, and the Covenanters. The very atmosphere of the house was missionary. Travels and missions were therefore legitimate reading, but Neil was very careful to exclude from his house all books that he considered trashy. A short time before his death he said, that, perhaps he had been rather strict with his children, in keeping nonsense away from them ; but he thought they had enough of it within themselves ! What he would have thought of his son's subsequent delight in "Punch," it would not be easy to say ; but if he had gone with him through Africa, and seen how useful the sense of fun

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had been to him in conciliating fiery chiefs, he would probably have enjoyed it as much as he.

In 1839 the family removed from Blantyre to Hamilton, a neighbouring town of greater size and pretensions. For some time before, Neil had adopted the business of selling tea over the country, and he continued in this occupation till a couple of years before his death. At one time it was intended that the family should emigrate to America, where they had several relatives, all doing well. David strongly encouraged this project, having a strong faith in Christian colonisation, and believing that they would have more comfort and less toil than in Scotland; and in his very poorest days, in order to facilitate the scheme, he offered them what in his circumstances was very generous aid. Patient though he was, and full of admiration of the virtue that led the labouring poor of his country to work so hard and be content with so little, he always felt that it was a hard and overburdened lot, and he longed to see them transferred to regions where the bountiful earth would yield them a more generous subsistence. The emigration project, however, was not carried out, his sisters having established themselves in business in Hamilton. In 1852 the family acquired a small piece of ground, and built on it a cottage—"Ulva Cottage"—much to David's satisfaction, whose first letter to his parents after hearing of this, began—"My dear laird and lady."

In his peregrinations over the country, Neil Livingstone did great good. He was the very soul of honesty and fair dealing, and he was always ready to avail himself of opportunities for spiritual work. He visited the sick in their dwellings; talked seriously to young men beginning life; lent books to those whom they were likely to benefit, and had supplies of tracts for giving away. Not a few looked up to him as their spiritual father; and through the district he was known as one of those good, consistent, strong-minded men, who are a tower of strength to the cause of truth and righteousness.

He enjoyed excellent health till about two years before his death, when he was threatened with diabetes. It was the time when David was engaged in his first great journey. Word came in 1855 that David had reached St. Paul de Loanda, but that he was not coming home then, but going to cross to the east coast. When his father heard this, he said earnestly, "Oh David, man, I wish you would come now, for I don't think I'll live to see you." His last illness extended only a fortnight. He knew what was coming, and was quite calm. His daughter adverted to his great anxiety to see David; he owned it, and could only say "The will of the Lord be done." He thought that in another state of existence he would know all that was worth knowing about him. Like his son, he believed that the spirits of the departed took an interest in their friends on earth; but still there was a mystery about the subject. "It is a new and untried state of existence," he said; "but glorious things are spoken of it. I took a deep interest here in all that concerned

you, and I think I'll do that there too." On a Saturday evening he uttered his last words—"None but Jesus." On a lovely Sabbath morning he passed into His presence.

It was not merely while under their roof that David Livingstone thought highly of his parents, and of the order of God's servants to which they belonged. Affectionate children naturally canonise good parents, and think of them as higher and better than any one else in the world. But it was with David Livingstone as it was with Thomas Carlyle—the more he knew the world, the higher was his respect for his parents. "I have a sacred pride in my peasant father," wrote Carlyle in London in 1832, "and would not exchange him, even now, for any king known to me." So it was with Livingstone. He recorded on their tombstone his gratitude for his poor and pious parents, with a deep feeling that their worth was enhanced by their poverty. Such fear of God and love of man, such patient industry and serene content, such devotion to duty and cheerfulness in much labour and sorrow, would have been estimable anywhere, but were more estimable than ever when nursed by poverty. In his intercourse with the world, he had seen that the Christian character is liable to many a twist from cross currents and influences that play in the upper strata of society. It was the more refreshing to look back on the Christian simplicity and transparency of his unsophisticated, guileless parents. And it was greatly to Livingstone's honour that, with all his opportunities of becoming great in a worldly sense, he deliberately clung to their simple ways and retained their transparency of character, and that, as Sir Roderick Murchison said of him at his farewell banquet in 1858, in spite of all the distinction and flattery that had been heaped upon him, he stood before them the same honest, unpretending David Livingstone, as when he worked in the mill at Blantyre.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

THE FUTURE OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

MORE than half the interval between the second and third meeting of the General Council is now over: already we are beginning to have our thoughts turned to the gathering to meet in Belfast in 1884, and the committee of arrangements have actually been engaged on a rough draft of the programme. Having regard to the great success which crowned the efforts of the committee in Philadelphia, we heartily desire for our Belfast friends the honour and satisfaction of an equal success.

To all interested in the progress of the Presbyterian Churches, and in the advance of evangelical work, with organisation of the disciples of

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Christ under this form of church government, it is matter of lively concern what is to be the future of the General Council. So far as we have gathered, there has been but one opinion as to the value of the Council among the representatives of the Churches who have had a part in its procedure. Making allowance for diversity of view as to what ends can be gained, there has been a uniform sense of thankfulness to the great Head of the Church for the originating of a Council in which representatives of Presbyterianism over the whole world can meet in conference. For the most part, the same favourable judgment has been formed in the Churches from which representatives have gone, and to which these representatives have returned with tidings of what had been done. Edinburgh and Philadelphia have united in giving good account of the benefit secured by meetings of Council. This testimony has favourably impressed the Churches, and the printed volumes of transactions have confirmed this impression.

We are, however, far from suggesting that there has been nothing but satisfaction, and that a unanimous conviction of the high utility of the Council has been awakened among the supreme courts of the several divisions of the Presbyterian Church. Among the members of the two Councils already held, and among the crowds of eager listeners who have filled the auditorium, there has been considerable diversity of opinion. This has been clearly indicated through many avenues of criticism, though opinions of an adverse form hardly found expression in the meetings of the Council themselves. The ideal before the minds of the members of the Churches varies greatly. This is the key to a considerable amount of the diversity of opinion. Some contemplate, as the primary end, a spring-tide of religious influence in the great centre of population in which for the time the Council assembles. Their minds are full of expectation as to a mighty impulse to be given to religious life in the city and district. These look for a great simultaneous effort to rouse the whole community, and, having such anticipations, they naturally express considerable disappointment when they estimate results. Others, looking not so much for concentrated local effort as for a general influence spreading over the world, stirring specially every Presbyterian denomination included within the area of representation, in turn indicate their dissatisfaction with what has been achieved. In the annual gatherings of the supreme courts of the several Presbyterian Churches, those members who regard the Council from a distance, never having had experience of the fervour which flows in the Council meetings, but who are compelled to judge of it by reported or recognised results, still reveal some indication of doubt—some misgiving at least—as to the real importance of the practical results. There is, indeed, no disposition to dispute the value of brotherly intercourse and conference, but there is some inclination to question whether the Churches are likely to reap large benefits of an outstanding and enduring character.

Most of those who are familiar with great movements, designed to

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influence large bodies of men, will be quite prepared for such adverse criticism and disappointment with results, as I have thus described. They will say these things are inevitable in every such movement; but they will also grant that there is a value in adverse criticism, while a more guarded expression of doubt may be allowed as to what the future is likely to produce. Criticism is, however, preparation for advance, and is to be hailed accordingly. There must be some consensus of opinion as to ends to be gained, and modes of procedure to be adopted, in guiding such a great enterprise as the organising of a General Council of the Presbyterian Churches. Towards the formation of such opinion, something is done by the expression of diverse views, and by publicity given to it. Under this conviction, there is no wisdom in refusing to indicate the directions of conflicting thought privately finding expression when the procedure of the Council is brought under review. There is, on the contrary, a true service done to the great interests involved. Not among Presbyterians, wherever else it may be found, do we expect any misgiving as to the benefits of public discussion of representative action.

In so far, however, as opinions are in direct conflict, it is obvious that what is required is to settle on clear grounds, which of them is to have preference over the other. For example, if some earnest friends of the Church judge the Council by the direct evangelical influence excited by it within the geographical area in the centre of which its meetings take place, this is a test quite inconsistent with what is otherwise implied, that, as a General Council, its value must be determined by general influence extending over all the Churches from which representatives come. Those who send representatives expect a gain from the representation, and do not merely send delegates to share in a specific work to be done for a selected locality. The character and ends of the Presbyterian government settle this. Accordingly the kind of result to be expected is predetermined by the constitution of the Council, however disappointing this may seem to those who are most eager for immediate visible results. The general effect in the history of all the Presbyterian Churches over the world must be the conclusive test, when the utility of the Council is resolutely canvassed.

To put this distinctly and prominently, is not to overlook or undervalue a more circumscribed, but more direct, influence exerted in connection with the meetings of the Council. Fortunately, we can never have anywhere a meeting of Council without such immediate and more direct results. Thus, we can refer to the directly stimulating influence of the meetings in Edinburgh and Philadelphia. And in connection with the latter, as lying nearest to us, and having its effects more freshly under the review of memory, it may be allowed to a representative from the European side to express the special delight experienced in recognising that the General Council had given an open non-American platform, on which representatives of the North and

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South could meet, without compromise, and with fraternal acknowledgment of the depth of their common interests as servants of Jesus Christ, enrolled in the same ecclesiastical form of Government. And, without claiming any direct agency in the matter on the part of the Council, it must be matter for congratulation to all non-American representatives that the feeling displayed by ministers of the North and South (not only by representatives in the Council, but by many more who came long distances, attracted by the interest which the great gathering in Philadelphia had awakened), has now given proof of its depth and earnestness in overtures for resumption of friendly relations between the Churches, for a time alienated by the strain which the War brought with it. As political parties have shown readiness to forget the past in a common desire to secure a future good, so may the Churches of the North and South, moved by deeper feelings, and cherishing even grander prospects. Deeply interested as all branches of the Presbyterian Church must be in returning friendship between the Churches of the North and South, it will be an additional ground for rejoicing that the selection of Philadelphia as the centre for the second meeting of the Council, made the Council itself contribute in some measure a result, fitted to awaken gratitude in every Christian heart. In this we have our best illustration of immediate gain in connection with the nationality chiefly affected by the locality chosen for a meeting.

From this, however, it is needful to pass to general results, such as may more fully test the actual value to all the Churches of the alliance into which they have entered in constituting the General Council. There is, indeed, a general good, if the representatives sent out return from the meeting stimulated in their own religious life, and having their sympathies with other Churches deepened and widened. It might even be argued that, were there no other results, the representatives and the Churches would be amply repaid for the expenditure of time, money, and labour. There might, however, be some considerable number to dispute this, and the Alliance might suffer accordingly. But much more than this can be secured, and it devolves on the Churches to take measures for attaining greater results. It is clearly demonstrated that the Presbyterian Churches all over the world are satisfied that benefits otherwise unattainable can be gained by means of a general alliance. It is further proved that a meeting powerful in its representative capacity, and influential in its action, can be periodically assembled. These facts give the greater weight of responsibility to the direction of the Council itself, making it a matter of urgency that the utmost gain be gathered from united deliberations and efforts. Our Council, if it is to meet our expectations, must clearly accomplish much more than any general gathering of evangelical Christians of all denominations. What we lose in expansiveness in comparison, for example, with the Evangelical Alliance, we must gain in concentration. The General Council of the Presbyterian Churches must be much more than an Evangelical Alliance.

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In so far, however, as our Council provides for the reading of papers on prevalent forms of unbelief, and the most suitable modes of dealing with them, we do no more than an Evangelical Alliance may do. The same holds true of discussions concerning Church work. Only when the circle is narrowed, and consideration is given to questions belonging expressly to existing Presbyterian Churches, does the Council address itself to the work which it is expressly fitted to accomplish, and which no other organisation can attempt.

If we test our efforts in this way, we cannot claim that our Council has as yet given very large proof of its power. We may, indeed, allow that things are still only adjusting themselves in connection with an entirely novel experiment, which was not free from a considerable number of risks. There was a certain amount of purely preliminary work to be got through, and that afforded scope enough for the maxim *festina lente*. There were many relations involved, and all were to be considered. The Churches will show wisdom in having regard to all these aspects of difficulty connected with the early history of such a General Council as now exists in a recognised relation to each and all. Whether or not it be granted that all has been accomplished by the two first meetings which might have been, it will be admitted that the ship has been safely navigated through the uncertainties of the channel leading out towards the open sea. The several branches of the Church have had their several interests in the ship considered and allowed; they have had their share in the honours and responsibilities of officer-ing and managing the ship adjusted: and now the question is the Future—that is the voyage for which all these arrangements have been made, and all these anxieties encountered.

What expectations are cherished appears plainly enough from what has come out in course of these preliminaries. Apart from mere arrangements for reception of representatives, and for ordering the procedure of successive sittings of the Council (matters which have entailed heavy work on willing and most efficient servants of the Council), the work entrusted to Committees clearly indicates what is anticipated in course of time. There are committees on creeds, and on united work on the Mission field. Deliberation is thus being turned on matters of faith, and of active service in the cause of the Master. Whether the concurring Churches should make an attempt to formulate a consensus of the creeds, or should simply leave that consensus to be recognised by the more negative and round-about way of ascertaining what is rejected or accepted by general consent of the Council, is one of those questions committed for deliberate consideration by a responsible and representative committee. What the finding should be, no one will be disposed dogmatically to affirm; but all will grant that there are advantages and also difficulties on both sides which may well have patient comparison before a final award is attempted. No finding having legislative power, except for the Council itself, can be accepted. A

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formally expressed consensus would therefore be only of practical value to the Council as a recognised test for admission of Churches which may yet apply for admission. It could not be regarded as a statement authoritative for all Presbyterianism, however interesting it might be historically. No doubt, if a concise consensus of reformed creeds could be attained, and could command unanimous approval in the Council, a great advance would be made, and the way prepared for all the Churches in the confederation considering whether it might receive denominational sanction. The attempt is, however, a delicate and critical one; and before it is openly entered upon, it is requisite to consider whether all Presbyterian Churches do at present occupy positions so closely analogous, as to warrant the hope of general concurrence in any concise statement of the substance of the Church's faith. The relations of the Churches to the thought and feeling of the country in the midst of which they have grown up, and of the life of which they are so far an expression, involve differences sufficiently marked to call for a large degree of caution. But this much there is present to the mind of the Presbyterian Church in all its divisions, that the practical agreement in matters of doctrine must in one way or in another find expression in a General Representative Council. The future of the Council itself must therefore be affected by the finding reached on this subject.

In close connection with this stands the form of acceptance of the creed required by the several Churches of those receiving ordination. In dealing with this, it will appear how much service is likely to be rendered by a General Council, apart from legislative functions. For if differences of action are only authoritatively certified to the several Churches, the thought thereby awakened must tend considerably towards defining the reasonable relation of the ordained officers of the Church to her creed, so as to secure, on the one hand, the unity and stability of evangelical faith, and, on the other hand, the healthy and safe exercise of personal thought. There is nothing but gain to be anticipated from united action in this direction. A true Conservatism and a true Liberalism do naturally find their place in the Christian Church. Presbyterian organisation presents the greatest safeguard for both.

A great additional interest as to the future concentrates upon the practical question as to co-operation on the Mission field. It has from the first been matter of serious concern, in attempting to propagate the Christian faith in heathen lands, that manifold diversities in belief and practice had to be acknowledged to a people to whom they could hardly be explained, as they could not be understood apart from a wide acquaintance with historical and controversial matter. One relief from this discomfort connected with freedom of thought and action in the several divisions of Christ's Church is, that different branches of the Presbyterian Church have spread out from the parent stock, until

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the branches are seen to touch each other at the extremities of their growth. It thus becomes easier than it could otherwise have been to give to a comparatively illiterate people practical evidence of the inherent unity of life in the Christian Church. But it is a great advance which is promised in this relation when a General Council of the Presbyterian Churches can direct attention on common interests. And the Council is happy in having its responsibilities in this matter unfolding before it at a time when separate Churches have begun to feel after the methods of united action which may tend to economy and efficiency on the field. Already we are hearing of united action in quarters so widely apart as Japan and Caffraria, India and Trinidad. The future is a promising one for the Council, which can look out on the wide field of Presbyterian missions to suggest and promote co-operation on the widest scale compatible with the circumstances in which mission work is carried on.

There is still another point calling for the Council's attention in order to secure true efficiency. The power of a General Council, which springs from its comprehensiveness, imposes upon it a restraint quite inevitable, and not seriously detrimental in certain obvious respects, on account of the interval which must elapse before reassembling. Indeed, such is the cost to those most remote from the centre of meeting, and such the toil imposed on those who organise its meetings, that the Council was induced at its second meeting to extend the interval from three years to four years. The weight of the considerations which led to this resolution will be at once admitted. But what is even more important than a general acquiescence in the finding, is a general appreciation of the dangers connected with it. Practically, it is wiser, if not inevitable, that the time should be extended; but the decision will make it all the more difficult to keep the organisation in a healthy condition. The more remote the interval, the greater the risk of spasmodic interest. We are in danger of gaining some relief from pressure of work at the cost of diminished efficiency. If advantage is to be obtained, and risk shunned, there must be some more matured plan of providing for superintendence of the Council's affairs during the extended interval. The results to be gathered will clearly call for some more complete and extended system of communication between all the Churches in the union. And the direct work of the Council as such will so obviously involve a close relation between preceding and successive programmes of business that some fuller consideration will be necessary as to the modes in which unity and consistency of action may be maintained.

Writing here under the eye and with the sanction of the able and most unwearied servant of the Council, the Editor of *The Catholic Presbyterian*, I shall not be misunderstood in venturing a step further in the way of suggestion, that the next meeting of Council must deal in a new, and in a still more deliberate manner than has hitherto been

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possible, with all the interests involved in a recognised organ of communication. Professor Blaikie has laid the Council as a whole, and all the Churches represented in the Council, under peculiar obligations by the labours he has undertaken and the success he has achieved. The proposal made at Edinburgh by one of the American representatives, that the Council should have a literary organ expressive of the literary power and Christian zeal of the united Churches, was an admirable one, which naturally called forth a ready response. And we have had ample proof of the wisdom of the choice made for guidance of the enterprise. We have secured much from the exceedingly valuable information from the continent of Europe, and from America, in addition to the able literary articles supplied from month to month. But as we gather experience in our ventures, new questions arise. With an extended interval between the meetings of Council, there is need for closer relations by means of our medium of communication. On account of the vast interests involved, it comes to be a question whether it is possible from any single centre to accomplish what all the Churches require. Must we not at the very least recognise the need for an American and a European division; and must we not cluster around these two a representation of several centres to be drawn upon as occasion requires? What is of interest to all the Churches we want to know; actions which would be recorded by the secular press, we need to have explained in their several relations. What has been attempted has been admirably done. But the Council must take still more upon itself, must deliberate more carefully as to what is required, in order that the efficiency of a great central organisation may be realised. Those who have been most closely and constantly connected with the work of the past, will, I believe, be prepared to allow that, while a great future is before the Council, it must organise still more efficiently, and provide for the accomplishment of a still larger amount of work under well-considered directions, during the period when much must be communicated, if there is to be wise preparation for future meetings of the Council.

Thanks are due to the editor for permission to deal in these pages with questions directly affecting the administration of affairs on the part of the Council itself. If what is here advanced give occasion for remark and criticism, the hope cherished is, that gain may come to all from timely animadversion on subjects which ere long will demand most serious attention.

H. CALDERWOOD.

THE CRITICAL PRINCIPLES OF MESSRS. WESTCOTT AND HORT.

WE have already indicated the most prominent lines in the critical method pursued by the latest editors of the Greek text of the New Testament.* The very rapid sketch there given of the process by which Messrs. Westcott and Hort collect and verify their principles of textual criticism, may have shown how complex a study it is, and how different from the mechanical summation of numbers, the blind appeal to antiquity, or the arbitrariness of a so-called "critical sense." They might have made their science simpler, and lent their own exposition of it a more attractive look, if they had chosen to rush, with some of their loudest accusers, to instant conclusions. It is easy to assume the *Textus Receptus* as the standard of comparison, and overleap inquiry, as the Quarterly Reviewer practically does, by pronouncing the oldest manuscripts the depositaries of a fabricated text. It costs little to set up such a canon as that by which Mr. McClellan deceives himself—viz., *that no reading can possibly be original which contradicts the context of the passage or the tenor of the writing*, and suppose you have obtained a solvent which will be equally used by all. It is a rapid method of reaching the goal to lay down the sweeping proposition, even under the shadow of Dr. Scrivener's name, that "Irenæus and the African Fathers, and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior MSS. to those employed when moulding the *Textus Receptus*." It makes short work of many a difficulty to say, with Dr. Godet, that "exegetical tact" is the only thing that can decide definitively between the testimonies of our various witnesses, and that "a judicious exegesis alone is sufficiently light-handed and sagacious to choose, among the various readings presented by the documents, that which best reproduces the apostolical thought." The temptation to judge by purely subjective standards is strong and natural. It saves a world of trouble, and flatters each man's propensity to regard the light that is within himself as infallible. But, as our editors aver, "There is no royal road to the ascertainment of the true texts of ancient documents. . . . The summary decisions inspired by an unhesitating instinct as to what an author must needs have written, or dictated by the supposed authority of 'canons of criticism' as to what transcribers must needs have introduced, are in reality in a large proportion of cases attempts to dispense with the solution of problems that depend on genealogical data." Their own object is to work out that best type of textual criticism which "takes account of every class of textual facts, and assigns to the subordinate method, corresponding to each class of

* *The Catholic Presbyterian*, June, 1882, p. 414.

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textual facts, its proper rank and value." And they must frankly be allowed to excel the best of their predecessors in recognising and grappling with the vast number and variety of data, which have to be followed along the whole limits of their influence before a reliable basis can be found for the operations of the science.

Nothing, indeed, exhibits more clearly the superior scientific certainty of Messrs. Westcott and Hort's method, than the care with which they gather up the finer threads which cross the broader lines of the process, and the rigorous honesty with which they strive to estimate the weight assignable to subtler considerations which go to check and qualify the larger principles. Many instances of this might be noticed. This is the case, for example, with their use of *composite attestation*. They hold it reasonable to suppose that under ordinary circumstances the force of this kind of evidence will be greater the nearer we approach to the date of the original. This supposition, with the reasons sustaining it, is stated thus :—

"In proportion as we approach the time of the autographs, the weight of composite attestation as against homogeneous attestation, increases; partly because the plurality of proximate originals usually implied in composite attestation carries with it the favourable presumption afforded by the improbability of a plurality of scribes arriving independently at the same alteration; partly because the more truly composite the attestation—that is, the more independent its component elements—the more divergences and stages of transmission must have preceded, and thus the earlier is likely to have been the date for the common original of these various generations of descendants, the later of which are themselves early."

They are exceedingly cautious, nevertheless, in the reliance which they place on this presumption. They keep in view several contingencies which modify it, such as possible inequalities in the extent and rapidity of ramification among the different lines of transmission, and the deceptive appearance of compositeness which may be produced by the intrusion of foreign readings into the documents. Hence they reckon it of the first importance to ascertain and allow for this mixture of alien texts, which may confuse the ancestries of documents or the lost originals of such, and they lay great stress upon this factor of composite attestation, only "when it combines the best documentary representatives of those lines of transmission which, as far as our knowledge goes, were the earliest to diverge."

So is it, too, with the application of the *genealogical* principle. We saw how little is made of Numbers apart from Genealogy. We noticed where the uncertainty attaching to numerical superiority is placed by Messrs. Westcott and Hort—namely, in those two considerations, that the individuals have to be proved to be independent; and that, even when this proof is given, length and condition of transmission may still make them other than they seem. But while our editors regard this genealogical reckoning as efficient enough to bring about at once "a wide and helpful suppression of readings which cannot be right," and to make

numerical superiority almost an irrelevancy in these questions, they are none the less on the watch for all reasonable qualifications of their principle. These are detailed and examined with skill and fairness. It is pointed out, for instance, that "where a minority consists of one document, or hardly more, there is a valid presumption against the reading thus attested [however authoritative the document may seem], because any one scribe is liable to error, whereas the fortuitous concurrence of a plurality of scribes in the same error is in most cases improbable." And although such a presumption is considered unfit to stand before the "smallest tangible evidence of the kind," it is still allowed that at least there remains the theoretical presumption that "a majority of extant documents is more likely to represent a majority of ancestral documents at each stage of transmission than *vice versâ*."

Mixture, again, has been found to play a very large part in our editors' calculations; and in determining its presence in documents they were seen to employ the instrument of *conflation*. These so-called *conflate* readings have been subjected to no small measure of ridicule, on the ground that only a few are instanced, and that some of these are by no means obviously in point. But it needs only to master Dr. Hort's whole statement on this subject to convince one that here again criticism is simply common sense scientifically applied. He is far enough, at least, from indulging in the kind of arbitrary determination (with which some are disposed to charge him) to make it rule in every case that the longer form of a text must be the later. The general principle, indeed, is that when a reading appears in three forms, the long form which combines two shorter forms, is the latest. But this principle has its checks. What Dr. Hort contends for is simply that, in such cases of ternary readings, the text which is manifestly made up of the other two is usually, though not certainly, the derived text. The reasonableness of this, indeed, is felt so keenly that some of those who are otherwise most doubtful of our editors' critical principles (the "Sometime Contributor to the *Christian Remembrancer*,"—*e.g.*, who writes in the *Theological Quarterly*) admit that "the most striking and convincing part of the volume is that which deals with conflate readings"—an admission which goes far to cover the whole case at issue between the opposing schools of textual criticism. And as regards the principles by which the pedigree of documents is defined, external data sometimes come to hand as helps in discovering the relations in which manuscripts stand to each other. But, as a general rule, we have to rely upon purely internal phenomena; and the working principle here is that *identity of reading implies identity of origin*. This has been scouted by some as a huge and misleading assumption. What Messrs. Westcott and Hort mean by this principle, however, is something very different from what their critics suppose. They are at pains to show how cautiously it must be handled; how many coincidences in reading must be discounted as accidental; how only thoroughly distinctive readings can

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be appealed to for this object ; and how the community of origin established for readings may be due in some cases to a complete community of ancestry in the documents transmitting them, and in other cases to a mixed or partial community. So all through, in documents, in documentary groups, and in lost originals, the qualifying operation of mixture is allowed for, and the necessity is studied of estimating by sure *criteria* the force of disturbing influences, and of separating the earlier unmixed texts, or parts of texts, from later accretions and corrections.

We may pass on, however, to some of the results to which this critical method has led. We shall look specially at those results which should themselves become, in the opinion of Messrs. Westcott and Hort, the trusty weapons of the critic. Of these the first is the particular affiliation of witnesses which they hold to be established, and so surely established, as to form the historic ground on which criticism may firmly plant its feet. Their conclusions on this subject have been sharply assailed. They have been repudiated as ill-considered novelties in which Messrs. Westcott and Hort separate themselves from the soberest inquirers. They have been denounced as giving us a worse text than any hitherto ventured, and the extraordinary assertion has gained currency that Stunica and Erasmus, in working with cursives, and one or two late uncials, worked with incomparably better authorities than those to which our editors pledge us. These doubts and disquietudes will be allayed for the most part as the positions themselves, the processes of which they are the outcome, and the points by which they connect themselves at once with what has previously been achieved and with the concessions of opponents, are more thoroughly understood. At the same time, there are some explanations to be made here. We distinguish, for instance, between the method and the results. The former we believe to be practically unassailable. It entitles the volumes of Messrs. Westcott and Hort to rank, if not as the first attempt, at least as the first thorough and fairly successful attempt, to establish "scientific method for arbitrary choice in the discrimination of various readings." If more is to be accomplished in this science in the future, the advance will be along the line of the same method. We do not affirm so much for all the results. The verdicts which our editors pass on some very important texts may not secure general assent. In the nature of the case some instances of various readings will arise in which the evidence will be so balanced or so indeterminate as to make a decision one way or other an uncertainty. There will be cases, too, in which we shall be driven back ultimately to the fluctuations of subjective considerations. And as regards those larger results, which themselves become the *criteria* for deciding upon individual readings, they must be to some extent tentative. The broad outline which Messrs. Westcott and Hort have worked out for us will remain. Their general findings on the grouping and application of

witnesses will, we believe, be allowed to stand good. But there may be something to revise in all this, as our sources are added to and our knowledge of authorities increases. It is right to notice that Messrs. Westcott and Hort claim no finality for their particular decisions, or for every point of their system. They frankly allow that "many cases of ambiguous interpretation of evidence are sure to remain, which the existing knowledge of the history of mixture is incompetent to clear up," and in such cases there is no help for it but to make the best of less certain standards of judgment. They express the conviction that the principles of criticism to which they adhere rest on "an incomparably broader foundation" than any other, and that there are very few cases indeed in which they may not be easily applied. They do not believe it possible to effect any real improvement in the text, except by following the chief principles of the method which they have found so fruitful, and applying these in the main as they have applied them "to the interpretation of the documentary phenomena of the New Testament." But they "do not entertain an equal degree of confidence in the numerous decisions" which they have felt themselves entitled on the whole to make "in comparatively obscure or difficult variations." They are of opinion that much remains still to be done in the way of perfecting these results. They look for much from some pieces of work which yet wait to be accomplished, such as Lagarde's long-expected edition of the Oriental versions. They would welcome as specially helpful "a complete and critically sifted exhibition of the evidence of the Egyptian versions." And they do not claim for their own text more than the merit of "an approximation to the purest text that might be formed from existing materials."

But acknowledging, as they do, that under certain conditions the text of the New Testament may yet be improved beyond the point to which they have been able to bring it, do they suppose that any very essential change is likely to ensue, or that new readings of importance are likely to be discovered? Their opinion is that no such uncertainty, whether pleasing or disturbing, overhangs the text. They regard it an "illusion to anticipate important changes of text from any acquisition of new evidence." Further investigation, may, indeed, lead to greater certainty of decision between alternative readings. But even in this there is more to be expected from a minuter study and a broader appreciation of the relations subsisting between the many witnesses which we already have, than by any addition to the mass of our material. The area of criticism, therefore, is already pretty much a fixed quantity. Messrs. Westcott and Hort measure it very exactly. At the most, it covers only about one eighth part of the New Testament, and even from this large deductions have to be made. Discounting mere differences of orthography, there would remain, on Messrs. Westcott and Hort's principles of criticism, only one sixtieth part of the words of the New Testament open to doubt. And discounting again the very large pro-

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portion of trivial variations, the whole amount of the text subject to anything like substantial variation would be only one thousandth part of the whole. Messrs. Westcott and Hort wisely set this calculation in the front of their enquiry. It should serve to allay the trepidations of those who imagine that some unheard of effect is to be produced upon the New Testament by applying our editors' principles of construction to it, to have it stated thus, as the result of a life-long devotion to the science, that the great mass of the text is lifted above all doubt, and that "the books of the New Testament, as preserved in extant documents, assuredly speak to us, in every important respect, in language identical with that in which they spoke to those for whom they were originally written."

The genealogical evidence, then, is held to lead to the general conclusion, that the bewildering number of witnesses is reducible to two great families, the earlier of which is itself divisible into three groups. In other words, the existence of four different types of text is predicated. A broad distinction is drawn in the first place between what is Syrian and what is pre-Syrian. The later uncials, the bulk of the cursives, the Syrian Fathers (Chrysostom, Theodore, and Diodorus), exhibit, for the most part, the same phenomena, and form a class by themselves. They represent a common type of text of a well-marked character, which may be called the Syrian text, as being current at Antioch and in Syria before the end of the fourth century. This is made out by comparing the mass of documents written between the fifth or sixth century and the thirteenth or fourteenth, first with the quotations found in these Syrian Fathers, and then with the earlier documents and Fathers. The first comparison brings out resemblances of the most striking order, amounting to general identity of reading, and points to a lost original which must have been of much the same date with the oldest MSS. which are now in our possession. The second comparison, following up a careful inspection of the whole character of the Syrian text, leads to the further conclusion that this text cannot have come in accidentally. It has been generally taken for granted that any such common text as may be got out of these sources was the issue of a natural process of convergence to uniformity, if not the result of an unusually undisturbed course of faithful transmission. But Messrs. Westcott and Hort hold that its features are of a kind which can be reasonably accounted for only on the supposition that it is the result of an effort to produce uniformity, in short, a *recension* properly so called, the result of the operations, not of copyists only, but of editors. The most of the variations in the text are thus found to have taken place prior to the fifth century. Before the close of the fourth century the variations in the text, it is supposed, had become so many, and the differences between the current copies had become so acutely felt, that the idea arose of constructing a more settled text, the outcome of which was the Syrian type which appears in by far the great majority of our extant documents, and is represented in the *Textus Receptus*.

Does it follow from this, however, as some argue, that the editorial process which is supposed to have taken place with the Syrian text, is a security for its superior faithfulness? Can we say that on this account the later revised type of text must be purer than the earlier? If we had reason to believe that the process of editing in the fourth century was something like the process of editing in the nineteenth century, we might answer in the affirmative, and we should then be able to admit that those who stand out for the cursives as against the old uncials, and for Stunica, Erasmus, and the Received Text as against Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Messrs. Westcott and Hort, are in the right. Facts, however, dispel this pleasing imagination. The Syrian text, when looked thoroughly into, gives evidence of being a text constructed on the principle of making things easy and simple. It abounds in conflate reading, or combinations of readings, found in other classes of authorities. It is not in harmony with the testimonies of the earliest Fathers. It lacks the notes of originality. It contains a multitude of things which give it the aspect of an edition that has borrowed from more than one earlier form of text, and taken up into itself what contributed to smoothness, regularity, and harmony. We know, too, how different a thing the process of editing was in those days from what it is now. The Quarterly Reviewer himself makes what is a damaging confession for him to emit on this subject. He says:—"We know that Origen in Palestine, Lucian at Antioch, Hesychius in Egypt, 'revised' the text of the New Testament. Unfortunately, they did their work in an age when such fatal misapprehension prevailed on the subject, that each in turn will have inevitably imported a fresh assortment of *monstra* into the sacred writings." Unless a radical difference can be proved to have taken place in the idea of the "revisers'" work between the times of Origen, Lucian, and Hesychius, and those of Chrysostom, Theodore, and Diodorus, this admission goes to the root of the matter. And such proof is not furnished.

Alongside the lost original of this Syrian text there existed other documents, some of which still subsist in the shape of our oldest MSS. And these embody a distinct type of text, here designated the pre-Syrian. Can this be made out to be an older and purer type than the other? It is argued, of course, that our later witnesses may have drawn from sources nearer the original and more faithful than is the case with these oldest extant MSS. But, however it may be with the hypothetical priority, the purity cannot be proved. If we apply the tests of transcriptional and intrinsic probability (and these, let it be remembered, are the very tests which are practically everything with many of those most opposed to Messrs. Westcott and Hort), the Syrian text is found at fault in the great majority of the least ambiguous cases. Further, the shorter readings, out of which it is most reasonable to suppose the longer combined readings to have originated, which occur in ternary forms of text, are discovered to be characteristic of the oldest MSS. And

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when we look into the Patristic use of the New Testament, the remarkable fact arrests our attention,—that there is a very appreciable difference between the earlier Fathers and the later in this respect. After making all reasonable allowance for freedom of Patristic quotation and uncertainty in the Patristic text, we have more than enough to bring out the existence of one general form of text in the quotations given by Fathers like Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Eusebius, and another in those given by the Syrian Fathers. But the form found in the earlier Fathers corresponds generally with that found in these oldest documents. There is much, in short, to prove that the distinctively Syrian readings do not appear before the middle of the third century, and that the non-Syrian readings are both older and more reliable than the Syrian.

This further question, however, rises, Can we say that these pre-Syrian readings, which do not seem to have been subjected to a recension, but to have passed through the hands of copyists only, are all of one order? Or can we carry the process of reduction and classification of authorities a step further?—Messrs. Westcott and Hort reply emphatically that these non-Syrian readings are themselves distinguishable into three forms, which are designated respectively Western, Alexandrian, and Neutral. It is impossible to give the proof in detail here. It must be enough to say that, following the method of investigation which led to the primary distinction between Syrian and pre-Syrian readings, they show how there is a perceptible difference between the general type of readings found in Justin and others, prior to the end of the second century, and that found in Clement, Origen, &c.; the former coinciding in the main with what we see in D, and the latter not. The analysis of conflate readings, too, is again brought into action here, with the result of showing that “nearly all the later uncials, supported frequently by A, and occasionally by C and N, attest readings which combine those given by D and those given by a smaller group, including \aleph B, and a few cursives.”

Thus, they mark off one type of early text as Western, represented most distinctly in the Græco-Latin codices of Western Europe, above all in D for the Gospels and Acts, and D₂ and G₂ for the Pauline Epistles, originating probably in north-west Syria or Asia Minor, and passing thence to Rome, North Africa, most countries of Europe, and also into Egypt. Its most obvious characteristic is a fondness for paraphrase, for harmonistic emendation, for interpolations from traditional or apocryphal sources, and for other things which point to its having been constructed at a time when the New Testament writings had not yet come to be regarded by the Church as in all respects like those of the Old. “In surveying a long succession of Western readings by the side of others,” our editors say, “we seem to be in the presence of a vigorous and popular ecclesiastical life, little scrupulous as to the letter of venerated writings, or as to their per-

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manent function in the future, in comparison with supposed fitness for immediate and obvious edification." A second form of this non-Syrian text is supposed to have risen in Alexandria not later than the third century, and probably long before it. It is represented now mainly in the writings of Origen, Cyril, and (though less decidedly or frequently) some others of the Alexandrian Fathers, and also in the two great Egyptian versions, specially the Memphitic. The analysis of this *Alexandrian* type is to some extent less certain, because no extant MS. can be regarded as embodying it with any degree of purity. The codices which contain these Alexandrian readings contain also a large infusion of other readings. In order to reach them, it is necessary to take combinations of documents. For example, combinations of \aleph , A, C, L, X, and particularly combinations of C, L, and the Memphitic, yield Alexandrian readings in the Gospels; combinations of \aleph , A, C, E₂, in the Acts; and of \aleph , C, P₂ in the Pauline Epistles. The characteristics of this Alexandrian type are the reverse of those of the Western. It is pervaded by changes which touch style rather than subject, and by corrections of phrase rather than enlargement of statement. It gives evidence of being the work of "leisurely and careful hands, not seldom displaying a philological tact which inevitably lends at first sight a deceptive appearance of originality." One other form of text, however, and one of capital importance, is brought to light. The disentanglement of this third type—styled *Neutral*, as being unlike the Syrian text, and yet singularly unmarked by the peculiar features of the Western and Alexandrian—is one of the most original of Messrs. Westcott and Hort's contributions to our science. The proof of its existence which they adduce is of a very elaborate and cumulative order, proceeding largely, however, on the fact that Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and to some extent Eusebius of Caesarea, exhibit a considerable number of readings which can be fairly classed with neither of the other pre-Syrian forms, and that readings of the same character appear in the two Egyptian versions, particularly in the Thebaic. This is the type which brings us nearest the originals. Among MSS., \aleph and B, and the latter more decidedly than the former, are its chief representatives.

Their genealogical method thus leads our editors to attach primary importance to those two codices of the fourth century, the Vatican and the Sinaitic, about which so much romance hangs. When these coincide there is the best reason to believe that we have reached the primitive text. Even when they differ, the reading of either (but more especially that of the Vatican), if supported by some other testimonies which are carefully analysed here, ought to carry. The application of the tests employed in the case of other manuscripts brings out very strongly the antiquity and purity of these two. The most rigorous study of their character and history goes to show that they descend to us from a common copy, which cannot have been much later than the

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original. They seem to have come under different influences in the course of transmission. B's ancestry had probably a "chain of very few links," and the scribes of B either selected faithful copies, or had not before them anything like the textual changes which come to view so early even as the second and third centuries.

To put forward such claims for \aleph and B is, in the eyes of some, the capital offence of our editors. Their system is compared to a pyramid turned upside down. They are charged with making the text of the New Testament depend on a single couple of documents, and these very corrupt documents. This is at once an over-statement and a mis-statement. Great as is the weight which they assert for the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, they are far from making the text of the New Testament turn so exclusively on them, or from ignoring any legitimate branch of evidence. There are corruptions, indeed, in these two codices, and none have more keenly sighted or more justly estimated these than Messrs. Westcott and Hort. But, to say that these manuscripts are not free from errors, is not to make the more numerous and more artificial corruptions of manuscripts which are removed much farther from the date of the originals, reckon as a nearer approach to truth. The point is that, with all their liability to the corruptions incidental to all transcription, these documents are found on trial to be more reliable than others. As their superior antiquity cannot be challenged, all depends on its being possible to show, first, that they are independent of each other, and therefore the witnesses to two great streams of transmission, and, secondly, that they have the value which is claimed for them. As regards their independence, it is certainly the case that they coincide in a remarkable degree, and that in all probability the scribe of B also had his hand in \aleph as one of its correctors. For all this, however, there is abundant evidence that, though they were prepared in the same generation, and perhaps even in the same place, the one is not a mere echo of the other. Each has a character of its own, and is marked by its peculiar individualisms. \aleph is distinguished by a style of transcription which is "rapid and careless," often exhibiting singular readings, and often exchanging synonymous words. B, again, has a tendency to omit words, such as pronouns and articles, which are not vital to the sense, and to indulge in individualisms of a simple, unartificial, and easily intelligible kind. As our editors put it—"The final impression produced by a review of all the trustworthy signs is of a patient, and rather dull, or mechanical type of transcription, subject now and then to the ordinary lapses which come from flagging watchfulness, but happily guiltless of ingenuity or other untimely activity of brain, and indeed unaffected by mental influences, except of the most limited and unconscious kind." And as to their value, the Quarterly Reviewer will have very few indeed to follow him now in his boisterous depreciation. The more these documents have come to be known, the more generally and the more highly have they risen in value.

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They have never been so thoroughly examined, as by Messrs. Westcott and Hort, and the great worth now claimed for them is affirmed not hypothetically, or on the mere score of their indisputable antiquity, but on the ground of their most rigorous subjection to all the tests by which the character of ancient documents is tried. It is not too much, indeed, to affirm that, with the merest handful of eccentric doubters, all competent critics of both the main schools, are at one in recognising the Vatican to be the very best of all our manuscripts. Dr. Scrivener, to whom the Quarterly Reviewer and his friends are so fond of appealing, admits it to be "the most weighty single authority that we possess."

While Messrs. Westcott and Hort hold that the coincidence of \aleph and B, as a general rule, is decisive, and that their testimony can never be safely disregarded, they do not assert them to be sufficient, either alone or with other support, to settle all difficulties. They call in the aid of internal evidence and of the secondary authorities, when \aleph and B do not agree. They carefully measure the weight fairly attributable to \aleph when B is defective or on the other side. They believe it possible that some readings, sustained by other evidence, and not by \aleph and B, may be genuine. There are a few readings, for example, which have either very little or no support from uncial manuscripts; but which appear in the ante-Nicene Fathers and Versions. Less attention has been given to these, we believe, than they deserve. Our editors have gone into this question. They admit that two of these, namely—Matthew iv. 17, and 1 John iv. 3, may be genuine, or entitled at least to rank as alternatives. They further acknowledge it possible that in a few cases our best and oldest authorities may be so corrupt as to have lost for us the primitive reading altogether. Such cases must be exceedingly few. But 2 Peter iii. 10 may be a case in point.

Their system has led them to conclude in favour of a good many readings, which other editors have generally stood shy of. In not a few of these cases, it is very likely that they will, at no distant date, be generally allowed to be right. We refer to their decisions on passages like Col. ii. 2; Matt. xi. 17; Rom. v. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 49; perhaps also Matt. xxi. 29, 30, 31; John i. 18. There are others which undoubtedly cause greater difficulty, such as Matt. xix. 16, 17; Mark i. 39, vii. 24, 31, vi. 22, xv. 39; Luke xxii. 43, 44; Acts xxvii. 40; 1 Cor. xi. 24, xiii. 3; Ephes. i. 15; Rev. xv. 6. We believe that the difficulty raised with respect to some of these is, at least, exaggerated. Reasonable explanations of the new readings are by no means to be despaired of. As regards Luke iv. 44, for example, it is probable that the solution lies in the extent of meaning given to the name *Judæa* from before the middle of the first century; and the *Ἰθου*, which is held so strange in Rev. xv. 6, will be found reasonably accounted for in so cautious a commentary as the Speaker's. This class of readings, nevertheless, demands further consideration, and an attitude of suspense is fittest in the meantime.

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While in their general principles, Messrs. Westcott and Hort follow the line of the greatest names in the history of the science, and in aim and idea are substantially at one with Bentley, Bengel, Mill, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tregelles, and Tischendorf, they are in special affinity with Griesbach in their central genealogical method. Here, too, they occupy no suspiciously isolated position, but work out a conception which has been before the minds of the greatest critics. Their merit is to take us back to the point at which Griesbach left us, and carry out his idea of the classification and affiliation of documents with greater scientific precision than either he himself or the best of his successors attained to. And, we believe, that the best proof of the general reliability of their system is its results. An analysis of any part of the New Testament will bring out the fact that, in the vast mass of cases, Messrs. Westcott and Hort reach, on definite and intelligible scientific principles, conclusions which a majority of their opponents admit on their own subjective grounds to be correct.

S. D. F. SALMOND.

Notes of the Day.

EGYPT.—Men like to see history—perhaps we should say geography—repeating itself. It stirs their souls when countries that, long ago, were the theatre of great events become the scene of new achievements. The past seems to lend importance to the present. In our little way, we do like great things, and we like to think that what is going on before our eyes is something very great. We remember, when the Crimean war broke out, a public writer endeavouring to give the expedition interest and importance by remarking that our ships were going to the very region to which, in the dim dawn of history, the Argonauts had sailed for the Golden Fleece. We do not need such far-fetched considerations to give special interest to the British expedition to Egypt. We hardly need to recall Napoleon's remark to his troops: "Soldiers, forty centuries are looking down on you from these pyramids." Nothing can be without interest that affects the condition of a country which was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, scene of civilisation; whose air was breathed by Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Jeremiah, and our blessed Lord; where God's nation was cradled in sunshine and in storm; which swayed many a time the destinies of the world; which holds in prophecy a conspicuous place, and, unlike Babylon and other great centres of ancient influence, seems to have no unimportant destiny reserved for it in days to come. The whole range of past history seems to lend importance and interest to the present expedition, and to stimulate the thought that a country that has so many threads of con-

nection with the past must be destined to serve some great purpose in the future.

Christian men are happily much more chary of war and violence now than they used to be. The expedition against Egypt, or rather against Arabi, the usurper, has been gone into with great unanimity by nearly all classes of the British people, yet probably there are some who would like to have their consciences more at rest in the matter. To them it will, no doubt, be a relief to know that the step that has been taken commends itself thoroughly to the judgment of the excellent missionaries from America who have been doing so good a work at Cairo and elsewhere in Egypt. To Dr. Lansing, Dr. Hogg, and other devoted men, it could be no light matter to abandon Cairo and Egypt, leaving all the property of the mission to the tender mercies of Arabi, and leaving the mission at a time when the stir among the Coptic population is unprecedented, and the progress of the mission work wonderful. Their having taken this step gives all the more weight to their testimony, which is very decided, that the suppression of Arabi's movement was absolutely indispensable, if Egypt was to be saved. In their opinion, the improvement in the state of the people during the last two years, when Egypt has been under foreign intervention, has been quite remarkable, and even a great convulsion is not to be deprecated, however much its necessity may be deplored, if it rescue the country from the hands of the reactionists, and set it again on the lines of justice, healthy progress, and fair dealing. Let us hope, though we hardly dare to expect, that the convulsion will be of short duration.

In turning all eyes to Egypt, the Ruler of the world must surely have it as his purpose to stimulate the hearts of Christians, as well as to tax the energies of politicians. Having sent into the country soldiers and cannon, we must surely send missionaries and the Gospel. But what a thought it is that the cost of the soldiers and cannon for a few months will be manifold in excess of the whole sum contributed during many years for spreading the Gospel throughout the wide world! Is this not one of the landmarks that God gives to show us how far we are, in Christian enterprise, from any spot where we may with a good conscience, "rest and be thankful?"

HARVEST.—The joyous season of the year has come round—"They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest." In the British Islands it has brought but little joy during the past six or seven seasons, which have been as disastrous to the farmer as could well be. The present season, however, appears to be a change from the painful uniformity of the past, although, with a climate so changeable, it is impossible as yet to tell with certainty what the result may be. If it should turn out that the harvest is not only abundant but safely garnered, there will indeed be cause for joy. Tens of thousands of families will be lifted up into a higher state of comfort, and all collateral interests will share the improvement. It is at such a crisis that we

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learn best the value of our common mercies. A single day of sunshine, while the crops are ripening, is worth untold millions. We cannot help thinking that this may be a crisis in our moral history. It is usually when prosperity begins to return that communities are in the best mood for applying the lessons of adversity. When the gracious character of our Heavenly Father shines out, the heart is softened; it is ashamed of its hard thoughts of Him; it sees the need there was for chastisement; it becomes more desirous of walking in His ways. If such feelings are kindled at this time, they may, by God's blessing, lead on to a decided change. They may kindle desires for further and higher blessings—for the outshining of that Sun of Righteousness, whose beams bring healing and blessing of a higher order. And the question may be asked, If a day of literal sunshine bring blessings to the earth that are past reckoning, what must be the value and the result of the outbeaming of the higher Sun—of one "day of the right hand of the Son of Man?"

PAGANISM AND THE CHRISTIAN NATIONS.—The trouble caused by the Chinese question in the United States is raising a wider question, that possesses great interest in these times when communication is in the course of being established between the very ends of the earth. In the United States, the immediate neighbourhood of Pagan and Christian is felt to be an uncongenial and undesirable arrangement. It is not for us to take up the discussion of that topic in an economic point of view, but it is impossible not to see how awkward the problem is that has to be disposed of one way or other. Australia, too, is sharing the experience of the United States. In other parts of the world, the Christian settler finds himself in uncomfortable proximity to the aboriginal savage. If all tended to the material benefit of the civilised man, we are not sure that he would be much incommoded. But it is found that proximity does not tend, as he would wish, to his material benefit. It is this that has made the Chinese question a burning one. The presence of the Chinese tends to bring down the price of labour. But the more vital question is, whether the presence of the Pagan does not tend to bring down the practice of the Christian? In other aspects, too, that near proximity of civilization and savagery which is taking place in various localities is inconvenient. It is not easy to deal with savages according to a civilised standard. As true civilisation spreads, gentle ways and manners spread. But gentle ways are not easily practised towards savages, though, as Livingstone taught so earnestly, they are the most efficient in the end. There is a great temptation to answer a savage according to his savagery.

All these considerations show how much we are suffering and likely to suffer for past remissness in carrying out the order, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature." Nothing brings communities into such brotherly contact as Christianity. If China had been Christianised ere now, the Chinese problem would not be so

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difficult. All these things ought to give us an impulse in the direction of missions to the heathen.

IOWA AND PROHIBITION.—The result of the recent vote in the State of Iowa, giving an overwhelming majority to the movement for the prohibition of the liquor traffic, is justly regarded on the other side of the sea as a very remarkable occurrence. The prevalence of the German element in that State and other considerations made it likely that if prohibition should gain, it would have a very narrow majority. The magnitude of the majority,—something like three to two,—has surprised both friends and foes. It is a very decided testimony by the people of Iowa to the need of strong measures to remove the evils of intemperance. It is a proof that in their judgment nothing short of prohibition will suffice. Yet in Great Britain all attempts to give effect to the principles of local option have as yet been unsuccessful. We do not wish to raise the question here, whether the principle of prohibition be sound or not. But we may quite legitimately call attention to one of the results that must follow the decision in Iowa. A vast sum of money hitherto devoted to liquor will be set free for other purposes. The facilities of that State for competing with agriculturists in Great Britain will be increased. Industry will not be burdened by a heavy outlay for articles, which, however they may be defended as luxuries, are held by our medical authorities not to be among the necessaries of life. It is likely that the example of Iowa will be followed by other States. The effect will be both to diminish taxation and to increase the resources and facilities available for agricultural and other industries. It is not always a benefit to America to be able to get rid so easily of old traditions and customs. But when one sees how easily she can leave the ruts of customs that carry many evils, one may well desire that the old country were not quite so rigidly glued to them.

CANON WILBERFORCE AND ENGLISH CHURCH PROPERTY.—It is not likely that we shall soon hear the end of the question raised by Canon Wilberforce in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, respecting the position of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as proprietors of gin-palaces and beer-shops, the name of which is legion. It is not the first time, however, that a question of that kind has been raised. It is now many years since the discovery was made that some of the worst houses of vice in the neighbourhood of Westminster were situated on the property of the Dean and Chapter. That outrage, we cannot doubt, was put an end to at the time; but now another question of the same sort is raised in connection with public-houses. Are proprietors responsible for the use to which the property let by them to responsible tenants is put? and if that property tend to the promotion of immorality, are they to be blamed? For our part, we have no doubt on the general question, that when proprietors let their property knowingly for definite purposes, they are sharers of the responsibility—whatever it may be—along with their tenants. But over and above

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that, there is a very strong obligation on Christian proprietors to use their property for the good of their fellows and for the glory of God. No body of men should be so particular on this point as those who hold property for a Christian Church. It is simply suicidal and outrageous that, while the Christian Church exists for the very purpose of rescuing the fallen, upholding the weak, and encouraging men by every means to walk in the ways of God, its property should be employed in a way that, however contrary to the wishes of the proprietors, tends in the very opposite direction. We are very sure the Church Commissioners will be in a miserably false position until the present scandal is wholly purged away.

Who can doubt the real tendency of these public houses in the case of the weakest and most wretched part of our population? We have before us an excellent letter, addressed by a wise Christian friend to the Home Secretary, on the necessity of enacting that public houses be shut on Saturday evenings as well as on Sundays. From reliable sources, Mrs. Bayly, the author of that letter, has gathered information on what goes on in many of these houses in London between ten and twelve o'clock on Saturday nights. The *habitués* have been paid their wages, and have left at home with their wives the smallest sum on which it is possible for the family to maintain a miserable subsistence during the week. The rest is carried to the public house. About ten o'clock "hard drinking" begins. The drinking is now mostly of spirits. Additional assistants, with sleeves tucked up, come to serve the customers—pressing them to drink, and serving them with tumultuous eagerness. By midnight the drinkers are maddened by the spirit. They go to their houses excited and raging, the terror of their wives and children. Is this a legitimate traffic? Is this *refreshment*? Can this be vindicated by Christian men? or can there be reasonable doubt that ecclesiastical commissioners are bound to have their hands clear of all such traffic?

COLONIAL EPISCOPACY.—A Natal newspaper gives an account of a Synod of Episcopalian clergy, recently held at Maritzburg. Our readers are aware that that small town can boast of two bishops—Colenso and Macrorie. The Synod in question owned allegiance to the latter prelate. In addressing them, the bishop said that the number of his clergy was three times as great as when he landed in the colony, and that the communicants had increased fivefold. We are not aware that there has been any similar increase in the Presbyterian Church of Natal. We know of no reason why there should not be a similar growth in the Presbyterian Church, and many reasons why there should. Between the rationalism of Bishop Colenso, and the High Church ritualism of Bishop Macrorie, there is an excellent field for a sound, earnest Presbyterian Church. We know the colony is somewhat scattered, and that it has been difficult to get Presbyterian ministers to go even to some of the best charges. We believe there is no better field for earnest,

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devoted men, and no colony with a finer mission field. We should like to see the Presbyterian Church of Natal strong and vigorous, spreading the Gospel far and wide in Zululand and other dark regions around.

American Notes.

RELATIONS OF NORTH AND SOUTH.—Now that the meetings of our Church Assemblies and Synods have come to a close, the Fourth Estate is sitting in judgment on their varied proceedings. The great ecclesiastical event of the year is the joint action of the Northern and Southern Assemblies, in entering into what are called fraternal relations. Like the wind, which, in sweeping across the strings of an æolian harp, produces a variety of sounds, so this movement, touching many chords of deep human feeling, has evoked diverse utterances. Still the diversity is not as to the fraternal relations,—this all admit to be most desirable,—but on some incidental, or rather accidental matters connected with the action. In the Northern Church there is absolutely unanimity of gladness that the wide gulf which has so long separated brethren has now been bridged, and in a manner so honouring to both Churches. In their excess of gratification some Northern writers seemed to think that a modern Curtius had jumped into the gulf, so that it existed no longer; and had already been discussing the question of organic union. As this subject was not present to the mind of the Southern Church when appointing its delegates, the writers on that side most properly refuse to consider it, and insist on leaving to the future what the future alone can determine,—a decision the propriety of which the Northern writers are now admitting.

In the Southern Church there is a general and deep feeling of satisfaction that the reproach of alienation has been so far rolled away. Neither the social and political antagonisms, nor the civil strifes of a generation already nearly passed away, nor all of these put together, can form a basis which can justify separation, or permanently keep apart churches occupying adjoining territories, whose members are citizens of the same land, speak the same language, and hold a common church polity and creed. Time is a great soother of aching, sorrowing hearts, and the logic of events often makes plain for us our pathway. The Southern Church has experienced the benefits of the former, and has accepted the teaching of the latter; hence her present action.

LOCAL FEDERAL PRESBYTERIANISM.—The present position of these great Churches suggests a subject for our next Council Meetings,—that, namely, of *Local Federal Unions* of Presbyterian Churches. Organic union of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world is an

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impossibility. It is equally undesired. But all the more should we seek co-operative union, so far as possible, with sister Churches. Nor is a work appropriate to such union wanting. Nearly all the Presbyterian Churches of this land have their separate missions to the freedmen, with schools, colleges, and churches,—all recognising the danger to the country if a community of nearly five millions of souls united by a race-tie be left in ignorance, and the obligation of bringing the gospel to such home heathen. Between these varied agencies there has never yet been the slightest friction; the field is so large, and the workers have been fired only by the holiest zeal. But why might there not be some steps taken to unify the work, by placing these agencies under a united or common management? Perhaps there is little room for improvement in the present modes of working; but if the result of all this effort is to be—as seems likely from the race-attachment of the coloured people themselves—the existence of a great Coloured Presbyterian Church, then the sooner the White Churches come to an understanding on the subject the better; and such an understanding would be a co-operative Union. The future of the coloured people is one of the great questions of this land. Are these to have a future here as a race at all, remaining, as Maury represented the Gulf Stream to be, “a river in the midst of the ocean;” or are they to melt away among the surrounding white people, under the marvellous absorbing and assimilating power of American political and social forces? Present indications point to the former as the probable result of our missionary activities; but if the negro has yet to have his capacities for self-government in politics developed, much more does he need judicious and concerted training with a view to ecclesiastical self-government, so that the Presbyterianism he may finally exhibit, while a genuine Presbyterianism, shall yet be the true outcome of his own mind and character.

TEMPERANCE.—The temperance battle that has been fought and won in Iowa is but the beginning of a campaign. By an immense majority, after eight years of struggle, this great State has prohibited the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors within its boundaries. Other States had, indeed, led the way; but the size and power of Iowa render its action of great moment. The States of Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois are coming under the influence of the Prohibition movement, and as moral reforms never go back, it is only a question of time when the drink trade will be as absolutely under the control of law (and modern law is but the expression of the will of communities of intelligent and moral citizens) as is the trade in poison. The distillers and brewers of the West made great efforts to defeat the Iowa movement, and have now commenced to “Boycott” every merchant or tradesman that may be identified with the temperance cause. At Milwaukee lately, a petition, signed by a large number of the leading citizens, besought the local legislature to close on Sundays the numerous beer gardens in that city. In a few

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days, it is said, each of these new "signers of the constitution" received notice that, until their names were withdrawn from that petition, there could be no business dealings between them and the brewers.

LABOUR DISPUTES.—For some months past the existence of widespread strikes have greatly disturbed the labour market.

Pittsburg may be called the centre of the iron trade ; and, as the price of iron is at present low, the manufacturers there proposed reducing the wages of their employees, or, rather, refused an advance sought for by the men. This led to a general strike, and the consequent closing of a large number of furnaces. This strike has not, however, caused such general inconvenience as the strike of the men employed in packing the railway freight cars in New York city. These men are paid, it seems, some seventeen cents an hour, and have asked for twenty. The railway companies refuse to pay this, on the ground that the freight traffic is very light, and that competition has cut down rates. There has been a great disturbance in business, but the companies have gradually supplied the places of the strikers with Italians, who do fairly well. Russian Jews have also been employed, but these have hardly been taken on before they have had to be turned off as of no use.

THE RUSH OF JEWS INTO THE STATES.—This reference to Russian Jews reminds me of a peculiar phase of the Jewish question which is now forcing itself on this land.

The Jewish population of the United States is about 250,000 souls. Since January 1, about 2000 Russian Jews have landed here each month, or, in all, about 14,000 people. This number is trifling, compared with that of the other emigrants, but then Jews are not easily absorbed, and these German Jews are immeasurably more difficult to manage than even other Jews. They are penniless and in rags when they arrive—paupers of paupers ; ignorant beyond conception ; physically worthless ; religious fanatics ; and as they have not come, but been sent, they claim that their co-religionists are bound to care for them. When sending out these wretched persons, the European Committees, it is said, have simply allotted so many to each American locality, according to the number of resident Jews ; while these latter, without being consulted on the subject, have then had to provide for the incomers. A most unwelcome and laborious task has thus been imposed on a comparatively few persons, while the money contributions of those imposing it have been far below the requirements of the case. Hitherto sympathy with their oppressed co-religionists has constrained our Jewish citizens in their benevolent efforts ; but though these have not been at all commensurate with their wealth or the demand, yet even these are now ceasing, and the Jewish committees allege that the national resources should be appealed to. In view of the recent legislation adverse to the Chinese, it is hard to see why Jews, especially of a class utterly unable to do the work above all required in this land—farm work—should become the wards of the nation.

G. D. MATHEWS.

General Survey.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE SCOTTISH CHURCHES.

THE Established Church is continuing its efforts of last year to increase its Foreign Mission contributions. The new convener, Dr. Scott, St. George's, Edinburgh, has issued a vigorous address. His aim is to reach an income of five-and-twenty thousand a-year. A thorough rousing of the Church to its duties in connection with foreign missions seems to be the main effort at present in the Scotch Establishment.

The Free Church has just sent two new missionaries to South Africa, and has appointed a medical missionary for the New Hebrides. She has also supplied two young men for the South Sea Islands Mission of the Presbyterian Churches of New South Wales and Tasmania.

The *Record* of the Free Church calls attention to ecclesiastical disturbances in Calcutta, which may have serious results. The way in which the High Church Anglicans intruded a bishop of their views on the field of the London Missionary Society in Madagascar is well known. In the same spirit the Oxford "missioners," as they call themselves, are becoming a nuisance in the Indian capital. We do not know that they have had any great success among the heathen, but they seem to be managing to get some of the Bengalee converts infected with their sacramentalism and ritualism. A native Church Missionary Society pastor, it is said, has adopted their views, and "many Bengalee Christians are moving in the same direction." "The alarm has been sounded," though, we are told, "somewhat late." The native Christians have been holding meetings on the subject. A deputation has waited on the Anglican bishop—a High Churchman—for explanation, and the reply they got was that his Church "keeps the union of the Spirit, adoring the one Lord, holding the one faith *in the one body*." The explanation was declared not satisfactory. It is feared by some that the Christian Bengalees are fairly split into two camps.

The United Presbyterians are giving much attention to home evangelisation. They are actively trying the plan of iron churches or brick halls. We notice that in the mission stations connected with seventeen congregations in one of the two Glasgow Presbyteries there are upwards of 1500 communicants. In an interesting article in the *U. P. Record*, by the Rev. James Taylor, D.D., on the "Evangelisation of the Lapsed Masses," it is pointed out that the Chalmers Territorial Church, planted in one of the bad Edinburgh districts, has added to its membership from the immediate locality 800 during the last twenty years, as well as 2000 from other parts of the town. Its records during a period of thirty-

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five years show "more than 6000 persons restored to a credible profession of faith in Christ. Three United Presbyterian Mission congregations in Glasgow are mentioned which, in a part of the city where not one in twenty went to church, in four years had 1700 persons in ordinary attendance, and 770 in full communion, 480 of the latter gained from practical heathenism. This is at least encouraging. The problem of the non-churchgoing masses, if earnestly, boldly, believingly faced, is not so insoluble, perhaps, as we are apt to think.

ENGLAND.

SALVATION ARMY.—The Salvation Army is still talked about. But the interest is slackening. "General" Booth has got many church smiles—many church advices—and now he is rather falling out of fashion. The Bishop of Salisbury has recently pronounced pretty strongly against him. But many earnest churchmen and others are anxiously asking, "Has not the Salvation Army some great lessons for us?"

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—There is little likelihood of the strange Bill for the liberation of Mr. Green getting through the House of Commons. But he will soon, as we understand, obtain both his freedom and his dismissal from his living. After him, what at Miles Platting? Well, there is said to be no difficulty, as the patron is of the same mind as Mr. Green, and the living will undoubtedly be given to a ritualist. There are, however, some other cases before the courts of law, in which the patrons are not to be counted on. What are the congregations to do if their ritualising pastor is taken from them, and a Church Association man is thrust upon them? Set up for themselves, it is said: make what the old Scotch divines called a secession within the Church. What does that mean? What will it lead to? The outlook is evidently felt to be serious.

There is a good deal of feeling at present in the Church of England on the drink question. The Temperance section and the Teetotal section of the Church Society are not working very harmoniously together. Some pretty strong letters on both sides have lately appeared in the *Guardian*. Canon Basil Wilberforce has not allayed the disquiet by a recent communication to that very cautious and decorous paper. The Canon is intensely earnest, we may perhaps say, almost extreme, in his "Teetotal views." And his spirit has been stirred within him—though that is too feeble a way of putting it—by an article in the *Sword and Trowel*, which accuses the English Church of being deeply involved in the Liquor Traffic, and from it deriving large revenues. Somewhere near "Albert Gate" there is an Anglican Church with a gin palace on either side—all three belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which include in their number the Archbishops and Bishops; a fact well known to the working classes thereabouts, and

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not spoken of by them in too friendly a way. When the Bishop of London drives from St. James' Square to his Palace at Fulham, he passes a hundred public-houses, all standing on ground which has been feued or leased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. These and other statements Mr. Spurgeon's magazine makes; and it asks what use there is in Episcopal persons advising working folk to shun the drinking houses, when their Church is perhaps the largest owner of public-house property in the kingdom. The *Guardian* is far from pleased with its correspondent, especially for "giving currency" to such an article from such a periodical. It admits, however, that the matter requires attention; but very feebly argues that, on Mr. Spurgeon's principles, he is bound to take no aid for his own Tabernacle from any one who may be employed in the selling of intoxicants. But, is not the difference immense between a *Church* involving itself in a great drinking trade, and that in one of its worst and most demoralising forms, and an individual member, it may be, of a Christian church taking on himself the responsibility of conducting, in what he deems a decent way, a licensed hotel or grocer's shop. Canon Wilberforce, we may add, sent the same letter to Archbishop Tait, whose answer was wise and kind, promising to bring the matter under the Commissioners' notice.

Lord Norton, in the *Guardian*, calls attention to the "anti-religious" character of a "science primer," published by one of the "chief Government education officers," which is getting into general use in public secondary teaching. Indian experience warns us to keep a sharp lookout on this matter. There is a negationism which is intensely positive and propagandist.

The Church of England attacks on the Revised Version still continue. Dean Burgon continues his onslaughts, and, we rather think, with more acceptance. It is coming out that there were keen debate and division in the company of revisers, and that Hort and Scrivener not seldom took different sides.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS.—In July the Wesleyans held their annual conference at Leeds. The statistical report showed a membership of close upon 400,000—nearly 13,000 more than last year. There are, besides, 40,000 on trial for Church membership. 520 circuits are on the increasing, 190 on the decreasing list.

During the year 281 chapels have been completed at a cost of £325,000. Of these chapels, 67 are in places where hitherto there have been no Wesleyan places of worship. Four times as many large chapels have been erected in London in the course of the last twenty-one years as in the previous 120 years of Methodist history.

There have been recent awakenings in Wakefield, Hull, Halifax, Oxford, and Boston circuits. Sixty-seven young men were set apart to the Christian ministry by imposition of hands. Some of them apparently were not up to the mark either in their theological or Scriptural knowledge; and some comparisons were made complimentary to Pres-

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byterians which, it is to be hoped, we deserve. The Wesleyans are perplexed by the numbers who are offering themselves to study for the ministry. Of sixty-three candidates who presented themselves, no less than twenty-four were declined. Unless in exceptional cases, or where great worldly advantages are offered, such a movement towards the sacred office is one of the best signs of spiritual life.

There was a very notable discussion on the report of a committee which was appointed to prepare a revised form of the baptismal service. This was part of a general revision of the Wesleyan formulas which has been going on for some years. It occasioned an earnest and animated debate last year. There are evidently two parties,—one anxious that no uncertain sound be given against the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; the other, while also professing to abjure that doctrine, anxious to retain the old language, which many think perilously dubious. Very strong for the new statement, which keeps clear of the High Church doctrine, and brings out the idea of the sacrament as a “sign” and a “seal,” were Mr. Arthur, Dr. Moulton, and Dr. Rigg. On the other side were Dr. Pope and Dr. Osborn. On a vote, it was carried for the change by two to one, and in the end almost unanimously. It is not, however, very clear what is the idea of a Wesleyan formula; it might seem to have no binding force, seeing it was resolved that the use of the new form should not prohibit the use of any other form presently sanctioned.

CANADA.

MEETING OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—The General Assembly met this year in the city of St. John, N.B. It met within the bounds of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces once before, viz., at Halifax, in 1877. While that Assembly was in session, the city of St. John was almost reduced to ashes by a disastrous fire, which swept away dwelling-houses, warehouses, and churches. The city is now, in a great measure, rebuilt in an improved style, many of the churches being models in every respect. St. Andrew's Church, in which the Assembly met, is one of the most handsome and commodious churches in the Dominion of Canada. The Assembly was opened with a sermon of great power and ability by Principal MacVicar, Montreal, the retiring moderator. He was succeeded by Dr. W. Cochrane, of Brantford, who, for a number of years, has been the very efficient and laborious Convener of the Home Mission Committee in the western section of the Church.

ATTENDANCE.—The attendance was scarcely so large as on some former occasions, in consequence of the distance of St. John from the centre of the bounds, and the fact that a general election for the House of Commons was appointed to take place during the sitting of the Assembly. This reduced the number of ruling elders. Still the attendance was upwards of 220.

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HOME MISSION WORK.—Home Mission work throughout the wide and rapidly extending bounds of the Church seems to be the duty to which we are specially called ; and it is gratifying to state that the reports of the work were in every way encouraging. In the western section of the Church, 141 mission fields are reported, including 422 preaching stations, nearly 3000 families, and upward of 6000 communicants. Of the mission fields, 26 are in Manitoba, with 102 preaching stations. With the rapidly increasing population pouring into the western regions, these mission fields and preaching stations must increase every month. In the Maritime Provinces, forming the eastern section of the Church, there are 24 mission stations, with 88 preaching stations, about 1000 families, and upwards of 1100 communicants. In connection with the Home Mission work in the west, 82 congregations have received supplement, while in the east, about 40 have been supplemented. The amount raised during the year for Home Mission purposes, including supplements, was upwards of \$60,000, exclusive of the amount raised directly by mission stations themselves.

FRENCH EVANGELISATION.—This, although in one sense a part of our Home Mission work, is superintended by a distinct committee. There are forty-seven preaching stations, attended to by the agents of the board. These consist of twenty-one ordained missionaries, ten unordained, nineteen day-school teachers, eleven colporteurs, and three Bible-women. There are connected with the stations—1345 church members and 5200 adherents. For the work of French Evangelisation there was raised the sum of \$21,000, exclusive of amounts for church building, &c.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Compared with the Foreign Missions of older churches, those of the Presbyterian Church in Canada may appear small, but we are doing a little in this direction. In the north-west, we have labouring among the Indians three ordained missionaries and two teachers. In Formosa there are two ordained missionaries, with at least twenty native assistants ; in India there have been, during the past year, three ordained missionaries and two female missionaries ; in the New Hebrides there are three ordained missionaries, and in Trinidad four ordained missionaries, and eight other agents ; in all, fifteen ordained missionaries, besides teachers and native assistants. In all the fields progress has been made. In Formosa, where ground was broken only a few years ago by Dr. G. L. McKay, the work has attained great proportions. The total amount raised for Foreign Mission work during the year has been about \$64,000.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES.—Reports were presented from all the Theological Colleges connected with the Church, viz., Halifax, Morrin College, Quebec ; Presbyterian College, Montreal ; Queen's College and University, Kingston ; Knox College, Toronto, and Manitoba College, Winnipeg. We have thus a formidable array of colleges, but they are all doing good service ; and, but for some difficulty in the

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matter of pecuniary support, may be all regarded as desirable in the interests of the Church. The students who have completed their studies during the year have been about from twenty to thirty. While in some of the institutions there has been a deficiency of income, there has been, on the whole, an increase in the amount raised, and measures are in progress for placing these important institutions on a more satisfactory position in regard to pecuniary support.

BENEVOLENT SCHEMES.—The benevolent schemes of the Church, such as the Widows' and Orphans' Funds, and the Funds for Aged and Infirm Ministers, were reported as being, on the whole, in a prosperous condition. In all the funds, the receipts exceeded those of the preceding year.

GENERAL STATISTICS OF THE CHURCH.—From the report on statistics submitted to the Assembly, it appeared that there are 777 pastoral charges, being 10 more than last year. Of these 41 are in the Presbytery of Manitoba. There are 114 vacant congregations. The families reported are 65,593, and communicants 113,781, showing an increase of 3717. The population connected with the Presbyterian Church in Canada may be regarded as little short of 500,000. There are 4402 elders; 9943 Sabbath-school teachers; scholars attending Sabbath-schools and Bible classes, 91,675. The stipend column gives a total of \$528,051, being \$32,680 more than last year. The total income of the Church is given as \$1,408,872, showing an increase of \$163,377. It may be mentioned that the matter of ministerial support has been before the Church for some years, the question being whether there should be a sustentation fund for all, or a supplementary fund for weaker congregations. Last year a majority of Presbyteries reported in favour of the supplementing fund. A committee has again been appointed to give attention to the matter, and report to next Assembly.

STATE OF RELIGION.—An evening was given to the reports on the State of Religion and Sabbath-schools. The reports presented the substance of Synodical and Presbyterian reports, and were, on the whole, encouraging. Many hopeful indications were referred to, giving reason to believe that there was, throughout most portions of the Church, an increase of vital religion. The subjects of Sabbath observance and temperance also occupied the attention of the Assembly.

The meeting throughout was characterised by great harmony and good feeling.

TORONTO, 10th July, 1882.

WILL. REID.

QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—The colony of Queensland is twenty-three times the size of Scotland, but its provision of Presbyterian ministers is not equal, on the average, to one minister for every Scotland. It has but eighteen ministers in all, and the number is rather decreas-

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ing than otherwise. There are three presbyteries, containing thirty-three charges ; but of these fifteen are vacant. Some of them are supplied more or less by student evangelists, but others are virtually abandoned. This arises from the extraordinary difficulty experienced in such colonies to obtain ministers. Some students are at present under training for the ministry, by whom good service is done in home-mission districts. This colony might do well to recall the experience of Canada. The Presbyterian Church there refused for a long time to sanction ordinances which were not under regular probationers. The Methodist Church was always ready to make use of laymen who had any qualifications for public service. Many people left the Presbyterian Church and joined the Methodist. The difficulties of new colonies scattered over vast fields ought to awaken the warm sympathy of the churches at home.

The business of the Assembly consisted mostly in receiving reports from the different presbyteries, and making the best arrangements possible for the supply of ordinances. The Assembly showed an anxious desire to overcome the difficulties of the case. Scotland and Ireland had helped the Home Mission and Church Extension Fund : £100 had been received from the Scotch Free Church ; £100 from the Irish Presbyterian Church ; and £50 from the Scotch Established Church had been received for the Divinity Hall. A report from a Magazine committee showed that, owing to inadequate support, the committee had been obliged to suspend the issue of their journal ; but the Assembly re-appointed the committee, in the hope that something might yet be done on its behalf. Committees on Sabbath Schools, Young Men's Associations, Sabbath Observance, &c., showed that their several interests were receiving anxious attention.

The business of greatest interest was the reception of deputations from the sister colonies of New South Wales and Victoria. Rev. Mr. Cosh, moderator of New South Wales Assembly ; Rev. M. Sale of Victoria ; Rev. A. McVean, ex-moderator of Assembly, New South Wales ; and Rev. W. G. Fraser, addressed the Assembly,—all indicating the desirableness of further union, and some pointing to one comprehensive Presbyterian Church of Australia. We quote from Mr. McVean's remarks :—

He congratulated the Assembly on the organisation of its operations and the large number of elders in the Assembly. He also spoke warmly of the large attendance of the public, and of the attention shown by the press. In Victoria the press had done nothing but ridicule them, but here it seemed to be very different. His special duty was to refer to the contemplated union of the Churches. The colonies had been divided, he believed, for the aggrandisement of the British empire, and he believed the divisions in the Church in Scotland had worked for good ; but yet he was a unionist in an ecclesiastical and political sense as well. He hoped to see a federation of the colonies, and if he lived would work, not only to bring about a federation of the Churches, but even co-operation. He hoped to see New Zealand, Fiji, New Guinea, and the whole colonies united, and with that view he came here. He wished it to be borne in mind

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that in a federation no individual church should be overshadowed. Victoria could be divided into synods, and the balance of power among all the colonies carefully preserved. It was not contemplated to interfere with local arrangements, and Victoria did not approach Queensland with any selfish view or view of aggrandisement.

The Rev. W. G. Fraser next spoke.

He could repeat what had been said of the sympathy of the Church in Victoria towards Queensland. Nothing had delighted him more in the Assembly than the report of the Home Mission Committee, and to feel that although Queensland was a small Church, she was bracing herself up for work. He wished to speak for a few minutes on Church intention, or the moral and spiritual power of the Church, in contrast to Church extension, or the material and worldly progress made. There was too much attention paid to the outward strength, and he thought too little to the inward. He then read an interesting paper on the necessity for more intense spirituality in church work.

SWITZERLAND.

I MUST add a short postscript to my last letter. I dwelt so much on things unfavourable to the evangelical faith, that I must give emphasis to a few facts on the other side. These are mostly in connection with evangelisation. In the city of Bâle, in which the Liberal party has gained so sad a victory, a peculiarly interesting ceremony took place on the first of June. This was the ordination of Angelo Peruzzi, pastor of the Evangelical Church at Biasca, twelve leagues north of Bellinzone, in the canton of Tessin. Only a few years ago there was no evangelical congregation in this region, which, at the time of the Reformation, had furnished so large a number of exiles for the faith. But, thanks to the labours of the colporteurs, some persons received not only the knowledge of the Gospel, but also courage to confess it. A small church has been organised at Biasca; at Airolo, the entrance of the St. Gothard tunnel, the members of the small evangelical congregation, formed under the fostering care of the Evangelical Society of Geneva, edify one another under the direction of a brother who was formerly in the Church at Spezzia; and at Locarno, a mission station has just been opened by the evangelist Barbieri. Thirty persons assembled there on Whitsunday, and on the day following, which is a public holiday, there were forty. It is a strange but saddening fact, however, that at the very time when the Tessinese Catholics were joyfully embracing the Gospel, and seeing their young community at Biasca received as a section of the Evangelical Alliance, two descendants of the most noble families at Zurich that had become exiles for the faith, MM. D'Orelli and Pestalozzi, embraced Catholicism.

Geneva also witnessed an interesting ordination to the ministry on the 25th of June. Manuel Carrasco, formerly student at the Theological School (brother of Antonio Carrasco—who perished in the shipwreck of the *City of Havre*—one of the first pioneers of the Gospel in Spain),

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came, after a fruitful ministry of nearly two years at Saragossa, to ask his professors and other friends to recognise, by the imposition of hands, the call which he has received from the Lord to preach the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen. Twelve pastors, belonging to different churches, took part in this ceremony, which was concluded in a very touching manner during the week of the religious meetings.

A few weeks before, the Free Church of the Canton de Vaud held its annual Synod in the beautiful town of Vevey. A new church, that of Bienne (in the canton of Berne), has increased to *forty* the number of congregations which now form the Free Vaudois Church. The past year has not been signalised by any striking event, but God has provided for every want. A series of religious services was shortly afterwards held at Lausanne. For several days crowded audiences listened to the message of peace. The work of the Lord is thus carried on, in spite of the efforts of the enemy. If we had more faith, more courage, more consecration in daily life, the darkness would disappear in presence of the light, and Switzerland would present to the numerous tourists who visit it during summer the spectacle of a land specially blessed of the Lord.

In addition to the evangelical services hitherto carried on at its summer stations during the fine season,—at Interlaken, Gurnigel, Thun, St. Moritz, Ragatz, Lucerne, and Baden,—the Evangelical Society of Geneva has just opened two new stations at Zermatt and Chamounix. Interesting facts prove the utility of these temporary services, the importance of which has also been well understood in Scotland.

GENEVA.

LOUIS RUFFET.

GREECE.

SIX MONTHS' INCIDENTS IN MISSION WORK.

In a brief review of the principal events, ecclesiastical and political, for the last six months, which will have an interest for the readers of *The Catholic Presbyterian*, as bearing directly upon the work of the Lord in Greece, the following points seem worthy of special notice:—

1. On the first Sabbath in March, the Greek Evangelical Church of Athens, which was organised several years ago, inducted into their respective offices its first corps of regular officers—one elder and two deacons.

2. The Presbytery of the Greek Evangelical Church—organised last year in Athens—held its first regular meeting in Thessalonica, on the 28th of March—Greek Easter.

The greater part of the time of this meeting was occupied in reviewing—previous to adoption—a translation of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church.

3. The religious services held every evening, while the sessions lasted, were well attended, the rooms not accommodating all who came.

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As the week progressed, the animosity and prejudices of the people seem to have been excited by the priests, so that several of the meetings were somewhat disturbed by "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort," and on Sabbath the house was surrounded by quite a crowd, who were guilty of some slight acts of violence, throwing stones and breaking windows. Something worse might have happened had not the timely intervention of an armed force dispersed the crowd. Some of the principal actors were apprehended and lodged in prison, and will be dealt with, after the manner of Turkish law, in the future. The blessing derived from this trouble is, that there is not likely to be a recurrence of such disturbances.

4. There has been a simultaneous and concerted action on the part of the Presbytery of the Greek Evangelical Church, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Athens, the Evangelical Alliance of England and of Greece, and the International Federation of Lord's Day Societies, to secure from the Greek government a change in the laws which require—

- a. The holding of elections on the Sabbath day.
- b. The holding of the same in the churches in many cases.
- c. Sheriff's sales on the same day.

His majesty the king of the Hellenes has expressed himself favourably towards the movement.

5. The Holy Synod has placed its seal on the edition of the New Testament (original) published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Hitherto the only recognised edition was that of Moscow, which was scarce and dear.

An Encyclical had also been issued by the Synod forbidding the faithful orthodox (so far as lay in its power), to read the *Translation* issued by the same Society, and this prohibition had been extended, by ignorance, fanaticism, and love of gain, to all the publications of said Society, thus interfering with its sales. This step will no doubt greatly increase the circulation of the New Testament.

6. The Synod has given its consent to parties desiring to place a copy of the New Testament in every room of all the prisons of Greece. The government have undertaken the trouble and expense.

7. The present ministry (which has shown an inclination to do something to better the state of the church), has (1) Forbidden the priests to carry a picture, representing the body of Christ previous to its burial, through the streets on Good Friday night, limiting them and the procession to the court of the church; and (2) Made a change in the manner of appointing the bishops, so as to prevent the use of them for political purposes and simony.

8. A gentleman of position and influence in Patras, the son of an English father and a Greek mother, a devoted Christian man, who has been for several years actively and most successfully engaged in the gratuitous distribution of Scriptures, has volunteered to conduct

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services regularly in Greek in that prosperous city of 30,000 inhabitants.

9. The means have been secured from friends in America and Scotland for the education of a young man in the New College of Edinburgh. This young man is a member of the Greek Evangelical Church—a full graduate of the School of Philosophy of the University of Athens, and he is at this moment in Scotland. He will prepare himself by a full course of Theology, to assist and relieve Rev. Mr. Kalopothēkes in the laborious and difficult work of editing two papers, and translating for the Presbyterian Mission at Athens—work for which it would take a foreigner a long time to prepare, and even then it would be done very imperfectly.

10. The Religious Tract Society of London—the known friend of all needy missionary publishing agencies, and the tried friend of this mission, has recently sent its accomplished servant, Rev. Dr. Craig, to this city, to examine into the work of the mission, with a view to assist by counsel and money, and consequently further the development and efficiency of its publication department.

11. The members of this mission stationed at Athens, who have each made a tour, in the last few weeks, through the Morea, have returned greatly encouraged at the marked change in spirit, produced in the last few years, of all intelligent men towards the evangelicals and their work.

It would not be proper to close this brief review, without some allusion to the death of the Rev. Dr. John Henry Hill, in his 92d year, which occurred in this city just one week ago. He has been totally blind for several years, and unable to leave his room for some weeks. For fifty years he laboured in Athens, as a missionary of the Episcopal Church in America. He was buried by the Greek Government with military honours, and the City Council of Athens has voted an appropriation for the erection of a monument over his grave. Panegyrics were pronounced over him, by a high official of the ministry of Public Instruction, by one of the professors of theology in the University, who has taught in the Doctor's school, and by the chairman of the City Council. For fifty years he had laboured for the education of the female sex in Greece, and left behind him two schools, which have never been closed by the Greek Government.

Other missionaries of the Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist Churches, have been forced to leave, or have died unnoticed, while each of these denominations within the same period had its schools closed by the authorities.

A few lines from the speech of the theological professor will explain the situation:—

“In reference to the education given in the female institute of Dr. Hill, it should be said, to the praise of the immortal Doctor and his venerable wife, that although belonging to another *dogma*, in opposition to other American and English missionaries who have been among us,

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they always respected our Church, with the greatest piety, and not only never tried to shake the religious convictions of the girls educated by them, but were always most careful conscientiously to confirm them, providing that the orthodox Catechism were taught them by an educated priest or theologian."

It may be added that in the second school, where the children are too young to be taught the Catechism, the teachers are all members of the orthodox Church.

The work of these schools as educators has been indisputably great; but they seem not to have gone beyond this one object.

ATHENS, *July*, 1882.

T. R. SAMPSON.

Open Council.

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO THEIR RULERS IN TIME OF WAR.

THE achievement of the 11th July, when the forts of Alexandria were silenced by the guns of British ironclads, amazed the world, and made despots, in whatever part of it, tremble on their seats. But that achievement did not terminate the business. Britain finds herself at war. It may be a little war, or it may be a great war. Evidently it is one of no slight importance to the destinies of the East. It may cost us many thousand lives and many millions of treasure. It may mark a great era in the downfall of oppression. It may be a great step towards the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. It may open vast territories to the more thorough influence of the Gospel, of commerce, of civilisation. All these are possibilities of this enterprise. On the other hand, if it should not thoroughly prosper, all these interests would be indefinitely put back. Turkish oppression would get a new lease of power. The Eastern question would still be the torment of politicians. Thick darkness would still brood over the Turkish Empire.

In these circumstances it seems strange that earnest Christians are not more alive to the importance of the crisis. There are many good people in this highly favoured land who have not heard God's voice in the thunders that have been rolling over Egypt. To them it is simply a piece of news. Whether the all but superhuman power that was exhibited in blowing to shivers those immense fortifications within a few hours, is in this instance a curse or a blessing to mankind—whether it be of any importance that the immense power placed in the hands of Great Britain be used for good purposes or for bad, it never seems to enter into the minds of the vast majority of the people of these realms to ask, or even of the majority of the men and women who read their Bibles and join in the public worship of our sanctuaries.

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When the little kingdom of Judah was surrounded at one time by the vast hosts of the Moabites and the Ammonites, and at another by the great King of Assyria and his legions, the first thought of the good kings, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, was, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." They feared and set themselves to seek the Lord. Then they sought the co-operation of their people. What a grand and instructive spectacle, that of Jehoshaphat standing in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, and offering up the memorable prayer recorded in the pages of inspiration for the imitation of rulers and governors in all ages! This holy policy seems now to be ignored by professed Christian nations. And yet we never had so many spiritually-minded praying Christians as we have now—men and women in all ranks, who hold communion with God, and who can say with the Psalmist, "I called upon the Lord, and the Lord answered me." "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my supplications."

But, through some strange perversion, it seems to us that all but a small proportion of Christians have got out of the way of acknowledging God's interference in the government of the world, and of praying for His help to our rulers either in ordinary times or in times of special trial and perplexity. At the prayer-meeting or in the public sanctuary, the subject is almost ignored, or, if it be referred to at all, it is usually in the most perfunctory and indefinite manner. Christian people cannot imagine how any volition of theirs can affect these great national and international affairs.

In this failure on the part of Christian people to understand their duties and privileges, they seem to us to be pulling down with one hand what, at infinite pains and sacrifice, they have been building up with the other. How often, for instance, is our Christian work in the foreign mission field sadly interfered with by our political action. Dr. Fleming Stevenson, at a missionary meeting held in Glasgow not long ago, stated that the Afghan war had cost the nation as much as might maintain 800 missionaries for 80 years; or it might have covered the entire sum expended on the grand modern missionary enterprise! Can we doubt that if Christian electors had used their power both by prayer and effort in a legitimate way, that vast expenditure, and—what was really worse—the injury to Christian work among the heathen, arising from the sense of injustice to the people, would have been averted?

To ascertain the true cause of this state of things, and to provide a remedy which shall secure to Government and Parliament the interest, the help, and the prayers of earnest Christian people, it humbly appears to me is one of the most pressing problems of the day.

The necessity for the British Government receiving all the help possible from God's servants throughout the land in this sad Egyptian business, is every day becoming more and more obvious. England had

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many reasons for calculating on the co-operation and help of the Powers who have all along gone with her in European Conferences. She is apparently deserted by every one of them when the sacrifice is called for—sad picture on a large scale of the world's selfishness and hollowness. Then the Turk is coming out in his true colours—inciting insurrection with one hand, and pretending to quell it with the other. Who knows what may be next? Our statesmen and generals are composed and confident. But neither do they know what is to be the issue. With God on our side we are ready to face any combination of the forces of despotism and corruption. But should Christian people stand aside and allow the Government and the Army to struggle on without their prayers, amid so many opposing influences at home, and so many selfish and ambitious powers abroad, what humiliation may we not receive! Should we displease the Lord by our indifference to the cause of oppressed humanity, or by our failure to regard the working of His hand, or to take hold of His strength—we must be left to ourselves, and our armies and navies, with all that the wonderful achievements of science have done for them, will fail us. But let us trust in God and plead with Him, ordering all our ways to please Him, it will be well with us, as with Judah of old under Jehoshaphat—"The fear of the Lord was in all the kingdoms of their countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel."

A. O. D.

Current Work of the Alliance.

THE CAPE CHURCH AND THE WALDENSES.

A FEW weeks ago there was received the sum of £438, 18s. through the Rev. Andrew Murray of Wellington, being the contributions of the Dutch Reformed Church, Cape of Good Hope, to the Waldensian Pastors' Fund. Of the many gratifying responses to the appeal of the Committee of Council on behalf of this fund, this is one of the most pleasing and notable. One very interesting circumstance is, the spontaneousness with which the matter was taken up. The Cape Church waited for no deputation from headquarters, but, as the movement commended itself to them, took action of themselves. We are not aware of any communication save printed circulars having passed between the Committee and the Cape. Hereafter our faith in good circulars will be very much stronger.

The Cape brethren were moved by the sympathies of a like history. Their forefathers had shared the persecutions of which the Waldenses knew so much. The Dutch and French who formed the beginning of the Cape Colony were, many of them, refugees for the sake of the Pro-

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testant religion. Remembering this, their descendants felt the claim of brotherhood, and were eager to stretch out their hand to their Waldensian fellow-Protestants.

Some copies of Dr. Wylie's "History of the Waldenses" had been sent out to the Cape by the Edinburgh Committee. Considerable portions of the book were translated and published in a periodical journal. By this means the interest in the movement was greatly increased.

The Synod took up the matter, and not only recommended the scheme, but fixed a day for a general collection.

The delay in collecting and transmitting the money was occasioned by the necessity of waiting for the meeting of Synod (once only in three years), and for the day fixed for the collection.

It is understood that the committee of the Alliance would by this time have published a detailed statement of the Fund but for some unexpected hindrances. We believe that such statement will soon be made public. Meanwhile, it may be stated that the whole £12,000 has been invested in Italian Government Stock, and that the pastors are now enjoying the benefit.

The Committee had a balance in hand before the receipt of the Cape contribution, so that the balance above £12,000, which was the full amount originally aimed at, is considerable. The Committee have not yet met to consider in what way the balance shall be applied. It is understood that, as the provision for aged and infirm pastors in the Valleys, and for widows and orphans, is very inadequate, it would be a great boon if something were done for them.

It appears from our experience of the Waldensian movement that longer time needs to be allowed for these ecumenical gatherings of money than seemed at first requisite. Still, we are anxious to see the Bohemian movement advancing, to be completed, as we hope, before the Belfast Council. There is more true brotherhood among us than we think, and more disposition to remember those whose fathers passed through such fiery trials, bequeathing to their descendants a glorious cause, with a true and steadfast spirit, but along therewith, small numbers, feeble influence, much poverty, and heavy burdens. W. G. B.

SUGGESTION FOR THE BELFAST PROGRAMME.

THE following letter has been addressed to Dr. Watts, Convener of the Programme Committee for the Belfast Council :—

EDINBURGH, *August, 1882.*

MY DEAR SIR,—In connection with the preparation of business for the Belfast Meeting of the General Presbyterian Council, in 1884, allow me to bring under your consideration a matter of great practical importance which has been occupying the attention of some friends of the movement, and for which, we trust, a due place will be provided in the programme of the meeting.

I advert to the more complete organisation of the Alliance, and especially the formation of a suitable executive for its ordinary work.

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Hitherto, little or no time has been given to this matter. At Edinburgh, in 1877, it was all we could do to get under weigh, and having drawn to a successful close the first series of meetings, and appointed a committee to arrange for the next at Philadelphia, we left the ordinary work of the Alliance for the intervening three years to move on as best it might.

At Philadelphia, the pressure and the bustle of the immediate business were not less than at Edinburgh. Though the interval to the next meeting was made four years instead of three mainly on account of local considerations, yet a feeling was expressed by some that, in order to be thoroughly effective, the ecumenical meetings must be held at somewhat longer intervals than was at first contemplated. This would make it all the more necessary to have an efficient executive to attend to business in the intervening years. A resolution was passed and a small committee named to raise a small fund for executive purposes; but, so far as I can learn, effect has not been given to that resolution.

A comparison with the organisation of the Evangelical Alliance will show how far behind we are in this respect. The Evangelical Alliance is not charged with more specific work than the Presbyterian Alliance; yet it has a large and steady yearly income, which provides for the easy and comfortable performance of all its executive functions, and enables it to carry on *Evangelical Christendom*, a monthly organ deemed indispensable for the success of the movement. Wherever and whenever the Committee of that Alliance find that there is a call to interpose actively and promptly in any good cause, they are able to do so effectively and at once.

Two things seem to be indispensable to the success of our General Presbyterian movement. 1st. An officer, freed from other duties, who shall have charge of all executive business between the meetings of Council; shall be in communication with the several committees; shall receive and transmit all papers and communications connected with the Alliance; shall see to the execution of such resolutions as that of last Council, regarding the Bohemian Commemoration; shall visit, or arrange for others visiting, small and distant churches; shall help to prepare for the General Meetings, and shall act as one of the Clerks of the Council. 2nd. A literary organ such as the Council may deem most suitable, for interesting the churches in each other's condition and work, and discussing ecclesiastical and religious topics interesting to the churches. To accomplish these ends a stated annual income would have to be provided.

Now, it is indispensable that this subject receive full and deliberate consideration at the Belfast meeting. It would have to be introduced at one meeting, referred probably to a committee, and disposed of at another meeting. Justice could not be done to it in the mere interstices of time between the other subjects of consideration.

The Edinburgh meeting was hardly over when it was perceived that one subject of much practical interest had been omitted—the question of a literary organ. An informal committee was afterwards named, which, after a considerable delay, organised *The Catholic Presbyterian*, of which the first number was published in January, 1879. Whatever arrangement may be made in the interval, it is certain that the Council at Belfast will itself have to grapple with the question of a literary organ, and this alone will require a fair share of time.

The Presbyterian Alliance has, I think, on the whole, effected more than its most sanguine friends would have looked for. But as the *eclat* of its first Council meetings fades away, more of active detail work will naturally be looked for, and called for. But surely the public will not be so unreasonable as to call or look for such work without providing a suitable machinery for accomplishing it. All that seems possible at the present moment is to provide a due place in the Belfast programme for calling earnest attention to the necessity of arrangements such as I have indicated.—Yours sincerely,

W. G. BLAIKIE.

Rev. Dr. WATTS,
Convener of Programme Committee, &c., Belfast.